The Sunday-Night Service

WILBUR FLETCHER SHERIDAN

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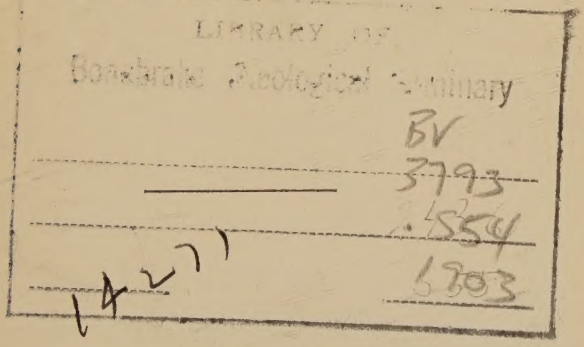
THE SUNDAY-NIGHT SERVICE

A Study in Continuous Evangelism

BY

WILBUR FLETCHER SHERIDAN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Dedication

TO THOSE WHOSE MINDS ARE OPEN TO THE
METHODS AND MESSAGE OF THE NEW
AGE, WHILE CHERISHING THE
SPIRIT AND POWER OF THE OLD.

FOREWORD.

THE late Bishop Ninde said, and he emphasized the thought more than once: "If I were young again I would strive to be—not in the low, vulgar, selfish sense, but in the high, self-forgetful sense—a popular preacher. I would toil for this as I would toil for virtue itself. If graces of speech would make me such, I would cultivate these. If youthful enthusiasm would draw men to me, I would keep my heart fresh and young for a hundred years. If going among the people would help me, I would fling aside all conventionalities and reclusive habits, and go from shop to shop and from tenement to tenement until my soul was saturated with the thoughts and feelings of lowly men. If a new baptism of power were needed, I would plead for that until I received the fresh anointing. I would exhaust all possibilities that I might

win the scattered, listless multitudes to listen to the gospel I was ordained to preach."

It is for the average preachers who cherish a like ambition that this little volume is especially intended. It is a study of conditions, methods, personality, and the re-enforcement of personality.

In his fifteen years' experience as a pastor, the author has served almost every kind of a charge,—country schoolhouse, city mission, county seat, and the large church of the large city. He has met the problems peculiar to each type, and the suggestions made are in chief part the outgrowth of the mistakes and successes of this varied experience. He has also studied the methods of our most successful men in this country and England, spending some time in London and Manchester, looking especially into the methods employed by leaders of the Forward Movement in those cities.

He is firmly of the opinion that, so far from being permanently alienated from the Church, the non-church-going multitudes "belong," as

Hugh Price Hughes put it, "to any Church that has the Scriptural audacity and the sanctified common sense to go for them."

If this book shall aid in reviving the strategic resourcefulness and the aggressive evangelism of early Methodism, it will have fulfilled its author's highest hope and deepest prayer.

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THE SUNDAY-NIGHT SERVICE

Chapter I.

THE CASE STATED.

It was a prominent Michigan pastor who was accustomed facetiously to refer to his Sunday evening array of empty benches as his "woodyard." His Church was a type of many to-day—an intelligent, well-to-do membership, homes comfortable and attractive, social ties strong and social engagements numerous; hence on Sunday evenings the full parlors and the empty church-pews.

The time was when the people called Methodists had no Sunday-night problem. The entire Sabbath's work had its climax then. Indeed, that was the strategic opportunity of the whole week. An aggressive pulpit with a novel message, backed by an aggressive pew with a novel enthusiasm for humanity, made inroads on the world and won converts by scores and

hundreds. Non-church members attended in large numbers, partly out of interest in the novel message, and partly through curiosity to see what would happen next. And Methodism grew by leaps and bounds.

But conditions have changed. A more formal style of worship has supplanted the old evangelical type. It has effected the æsthetic and ritualistic enrichment of the morning service. Its dignity and educational value have been increased. That service has become so popular in some places that it approximates the character of a social function. But the people who crowd the morning service do not feel called to appear at night. They are what Mr. Gladstone, in discussing this subject, humorously called "oncesters." Only the loyal few get out to the evening service also, in many of our Churches.

The result is the decline of the Sunday-evening service; for, when the leading people, socially and financially, drop out, their example is followed by many others, and by none

more quickly than the "outsiders." The public is sensitive to unpopularity. It scents it from afar, as a deer scents danger. And there is nothing the public is so much afraid of as a thing that is struggling for life. Nine out of ten men do not act independently. They will not put their names to a subscription paper until they see who else has signed it. There is either a good deal of sheep nature about men, or a good deal of human nature about sheep. They follow the bellwether. Nothing draws a crowd like a crowd, and nothing scares men like an empty room.

It is also true that like follows like. If only the humbler class of Church people attend the night service, it is only the humbler class of outsiders who will be attracted. While if the more influential people of the Church attend, people of their own class will be drawn thither.

It would not be a fair statement of the case were we to fail to recognize the keener competition that the Church has to meet in our generation as compared with the earlier genera-

tions of Methodists. Then, there was little to go to except the Church. Now, the Sunday theater, the Sunday concert, the Sunday excursion, and the Sunday newspaper come into the most active competition with the Church. Business life, too, is so intense to-day as to leave many men fagged in body and mind at the week's close; while the original American Sabbath ideal, so favorable to securing a hearing for the gospel message, has been completely buried beneath an avalanche of twenty million immigrants from Continental Europe in the past fifty years—even as the civilization of Southern Europe was buried in the fifth and sixth centuries beneath the avalanche of barbarians from the north of Europe. Many of these immigrants have been Church members; but they have been trained in Churches that either have no Sunday-night service, or that place on it but a scant emphasis. And the attitude of these Churches has affected us more than many think.

Then we must take into consideration

that the message of Methodism is no longer novel. The people are familiar with it. Other Churches than our own are proclaiming it, with some modifications. Hence a novel message no longer exists as a magnet.

Along with this there has been a decline in aggressiveness. Things do not often "happen" at the Sunday-night service. People are not there weeping on account of their sins, or bowing at the "mourners'-bench" as seekers of salvation. Our Methodist services have assumed the same eminent respectability that characterizes the services of our sister denominations. Any one can forecast the character of any service. There will be several hymns, an anthem or two, a prayer, a Scripture lesson, an address of more or less merit on a moral or religious theme, a benediction, social greetings between friends, and the dispersion of the people for their several homes. All of this is very proper and very pleasant, and has its modicum of value. But it is not a powerful magnet for the indifferent multitudes, and it is not what made Methodism

mighty in its first hundred years. People are profoundly interested at bottom in the moral and spiritual struggles of their fellows. And nothing will draw men to a church like the knowledge that such moral struggles and transformations are taking place from Sunday night to Sunday night.

From all these causes—the decline of aggressiveness, the more formal type of worship, the rise and rapid multiplication of places of Sunday amusement, the strangling of the American Sabbath ideal, and the increased intensity of our business and social life—has come the decline of the Sunday-night service.

Chapter II.

SHALL THE SUNDAY-NIGHT SERVICE BE ABANDONED?

Hundreds of Churches in our sister denominations have answered "Yes," and those churches stand, great piles of brick and stone, gloomy and deserted, while the waves of a human sea beat about their base. The Episcopal Churches, as a rule, have no Sunday-night service. Out of five hundred and twenty-three Congregational Churches tabulated by Margaret Lawrence in "Parish Problems" (page 421), four hundred and fifty had abandoned the night service. Hundreds of Churches of other denominations have done the same, including an occasional Methodist Church. No doubt entirely satisfying arguments have been presented by their leaders in taking this step. Their course has been justified to their own conscience. But there are some perverse saints in those con-

gregations who think they read through their tears "Ichabod" written over the doors. Other Churches have shifted the night service to the afternoon, while still others have relegated it to the basement or chapel, permitting it "to struggle under the incubus of being a second-rate affair."

Those who abandon the Sunday-night service advance two or three arguments in support of their action. Some say that it is too much to expect a minister to prepare two discourses a week for the same audience; that it results in two poor discourses when he might have made one good one. Others object to a night service on the ground that the pressure of business life is such that Sunday evening is the only time men have for their families, and that they owe to their homes their presence on that night.

The first of these objections would be valid if the output of the preacher is to be viewed simply as literature. If his function is that of a lecturer only, it is probable that his public

efforts would better be confined to monthly appearances, rather than weekly. But his function is not that of the litterateur or lecturer, but a much more vital one. He is a soul-physician. He is a minister to the constant needs of the human heart and conscience. And if he be a man whose relation to the Source of spiritual life and power is vital, he will have two messages a week for needy men. If his service be anything more than perfunctory, he will not lack material for two appeals a week to immortal souls. If John Wesley could preach two sermons a day for half a century, should not his successors be able to preach two a week?

As for the objection that men owe Sunday nights to their families, we have simply to say that men owe something to Jesus Christ also, and to humanity for Jesus Christ's sake. Are there not one hundred and sixty-eight hours in the week? And may only one of these be given to the salvation of a lost world? Such *dilettante* Christianity will never raise a dike against the encroaching seas of vice, nor advance its skir-

mish-line a mile into the enemy's country. A man does indeed owe something to his family; very much more than many men are giving. But let him not rob God to pay it. Let him rather subtract an evening or two in the week from his lodge and club engagements. If a man honestly finds himself overtaxed with Church work, let him consider very carefully before cutting out the Sunday-night service, lest he sever the one line of communication between himself as a Christian worker and the mass of unconverted men.

The fact is that the Sunday-night service is the one service of the week that irreligious men are inclined to attend, especially laboring men. Sunday morning they are tired. They do not care to shave and dress for church. They want to lie around, and rest, and read, and talk. But by evening they are sated with mere idleness, and are ready to sally forth in search of something that will interest and employ their minds. If they have been religiously reared, they are sure to seek some church. If that church is

closed and barred, it only serves to increase their indifference to religion. If the Church has only a corporal's guard scattered about where a regiment ought to be, these outsiders will dodge it as they would a blow, and they will pass on to the Sunday theater or concert or beer-garden. Had there been a congregation of earnest, cordial Christian people in the church, busy about their Master's business, these non-Church members would have immediately felt the magnetic influence and warm glow of life, and would have tarried, and would have found their way thither again and again. But because two-thirds of that congregation were at their homes, in gown and slippers, taking their ease at their fireside, or entertaining their friends with ragtime music in the parlor, they drove away by their indifference the men and women over whom Jesus Christ was yearning with an infinite longing.

A preacher is a fisher of men. But the fisher needs a net. And the preacher's net is his Church, which throws its invisible meshes

of cordiality and sympathy and Christian love about unsaved men, and draws them into the kingdom of God. But if that net is all rents, the fish will all get away. And every absentee member is a rent in the net.

If the Church's whole duty is fulfilled in the instruction of the children and youth and the building up of the adults who compose its membership, then the Sunday-night service may be treated as a superfluity. And there are denominations of Christians which take this view of their obligation. But if the Church has a mission to, and a mission for, the unsaved multitudes of adults, then the Sunday-night service is an absolute necessity to the successful fulfillment of that mission.

Professor Max Müller, in his delightful reminiscences of literary men in "Auld Lang Syne," tells the story of a brother of Ralph Waldo Emerson who had been completing his training for the Unitarian ministry in Germany. On his way home his ship was overtaken by a terrific storm. In his fear, young

Emerson promised God that if he would only let him live, he would "give up the ministry and go to work to earn an honest living." This vow he faithfully kept. With his message, that was exactly the thing for him to do. It is the consistent thing for every preacher who has no saving message. And it is the consistent thing for every Church to close its doors on Sunday nights if it has no saving message for the unchurched multitudes.

But with the Methodist Episcopal Church this is not true. Our peculiar depositum has been a message of compelling power for men who were the slaves of sin. While holding that the ideal Christian is he who grows up from childhood in Christ, yet we have insisted that God would make all things new for the man who had neglected Christ in childhood and youth. To turn from this message now, and confine ourselves to a purely didactic, child-training ministry, would be to be untrue to our own traditions and to the spirit and practice of apostolic Christianity.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell, successor of Dr. Joseph Parker, recently said that the most humiliating hour in his ministry was when he awoke to the fact that he was unable to meet the moral needs of a struggling soul. And it is, or ought to be, a time of the deepest humiliation to any Church that finds itself unable to meet the moral needs of the multitudes who are round about it, when "the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength enough to deliver." However stately and splendid the ritual of such a Church, however soothing its music and fragrant the rosewater with which it sprays the consciences of its worshipers, and however profound its pity or contempt for the "sects" and their "irregular" methods of soul-winning, preferring that men should be "regularly" lost rather than "irregularly" saved, such a Church has lost the one distinct quality which entitles it to be called Christian—its redeeming mission. For no Church is really Christian which is not a redemptive force, which does not buy back lost men from their

captivity to sin. Such a Church, without knowing it, has reverted to the old Jewish type, as all Christian Churches throughout the centuries have shown a tendency to do, save as they have held constantly before themselves the original ideal of Christianity as a religion of redemption. Hence it is that in hundred of Churches,

> "The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed;
> But swoll'n with wind and the rank mist they draw,
> Rot inwardly and foul contagion spread."

We do not contend that the Sunday-night service is the only means of increase to the Church. The Sunday-school is a great and important feeder also. We do contend that the Sunday-night service is one of the two great sources of increase. The non-revivalistic Churches and the ritualistic Churches add to their membership almost wholly through the Sunday-school and the training-classes for children. But while Methodism may well emulate the care and zeal of these Churches in training the children, yet we are called also by our doctrines, our traditions, and our ministerial vows

to the more heroic work of facing mature men in their sins and worldliness, and calling them to repentance and holiness.

"We are most powerful when we are most ourselves," said Dr. Joseph Parker, in his last address. "All aping is weakness." And the mission of Methodism is an aggressive evangelism, to "spread Scriptural holiness over these lands." And if it be true, as Dr. Parker declared shortly before his death, that "the future of Protestantism belongs to the Methodists," it will be because we shall be loyal to our commission; we shall hold steadily to the ideals and methods of an aggressive evangelism. The success of Collier and his co-laborers in Manchester, with six thousand members now where seventeen years ago there were only sixty, and the remarkable work of Hugh Price Hughes and his associates in West London, show that the re-emphasizing of the fundamental things for which Methodism stands in the Sunday-night service all the year round produces the same blessed re-

sults that it did under the preaching of the first and second generation of Methodists.

The slurring over of the Sunday-night service in our American Churches is a symptom of a deeper disease; namely, indifference to the salvation of the multitudes. We preachers spend a disproportionate amount of our time and energies on the Church membership. We preach to saints too much, and to sinners too little. We spend too much of our afternoons in the homes, and not enough in the factories and shops and stores. Too much time is spent in "coddling the saints." Hugh Price Hughes well says: "The Church was founded, not to protect sickly, hothouse Christians from a breath of fresh air, but to evangelize the human race. It is an army to conquer the world and the devil, not an ambulance corps to carry about lazy Christians who ought to walk on their own feet."

There is a law of proportion to be followed in a well-balanced ministry. It is not neces-

sary that every sermon should be directly evangelistic, or close with an exhortation. But we insist that a ministry that consists simply in teaching, in "sowing the seed," as so many brethren are fond of saying, without any expectation that that seed is going to spring up this side of the millennium, is abnormal, and ill-balanced, and unscriptural. And a ministry that consists in presenting again and again the evidences of Christianity to people, the vast majority of whom never doubted them, but who do profoundly need to be aroused to act up to what they do believe, is an abnormal and unbalanced ministry. And the pastor who sees no souls converted under his preaching week after week and month after month, may well consider whether he has not forfeited his call to preach the gospel.

Chapter III.

HOW SHALL WE DRAW THE PEOPLE?

The answer so often given in Preachers' Meetings—"By preaching the simple gospel"—is not true, even though, in the sympathetic atmosphere of the hour, it calls forth a chorus of "Amens." There are thousands of men preaching a pure and simple gospel to empty benches. There are merchants whose goods are lying unturned on their shelves while their neighbors' stores are crowded with customers. What makes the difference? It is the difference in men and in methods.

It is not the plan of this book to discuss differences of personality. "Can a man by taking thought add a cubit to his stature?" We can not, in the very nature of things, all be Simpsons or Beechers or Phillips Brookses. But this book will discuss the re-enforcement of

personality and those methods which the men without genius, save "the capacity for taking infinite pains," can use to compel a fruitful ministry.

Here and there a pulpit star blazes forth, who fills his church by the brilliancy of his preaching powers. But his name is not legion. Church committees by the score are searching for him with the telescope and magnifying glass. Whole Conferences have to get along without him. And the world is not to be saved by his kind. To wait for him is to foreordain failure. William Arthur has wisely pointed out that the world must be brought to Christ, not by enlisting the services of extraordinary men, but by endowing ordinary men with extraordinary power. And the Holy Ghost has always shown himself willing to use plans and methods. Therefore the important thing is to secure that re-enforcement of personality plus those methods which the average man can use.

The re-enforcement of personality is so important a matter as to demand treatment in a

separate chapter. The present chapter will deal with methods.

The successful merchant not only has good goods, but he advertises. He keeps his business before the public eye. He thinks about how to do it. He plans new ways of doing things. He watches keenly the public pulse. He takes and reads—yea, studies—periodicals that discuss the various phases of his line of business.

Jesus said that the children of this world were wiser than the children of light. We think, because we have a good thing, people will be bound to recognize it at once. But they do not.

> "Seven cities warred for Homer being dead,
> Who, living, had no roof to shroud his head."

Many a bishop has had his hand shaken until sore by people who would not go around the corner to hear him preach when he was a pastor. Men are not expert in detecting contemporary greatness. So the only way to make them understand that something good is going

on is to tell them about it, and to tell them about it in such an interesting and fresh way that they can not forget it. This the business men of the land have discovered, and they may teach us ministers many things we need to know. We can learn from the advertising men of any large business house how to keep Christ's work before the public eye. We may learn from the great insurance companies how to reach individual men. We can learn from the political parties how to make a systematic house-to-house or factory-to-factory or farm-to-farm canvass.

The Church that succeeds uses printer's ink. It utilizes the local press. The wise pastor cultivates friendly relations with the local newspaper men for Christ's sake. He does not cultivate them for his own sake—the wise pastor does not; for no set of men are keener judges of human nature or more utterly despise the man who seeks personal "puffs." Many a preacher has lost all influence with the press by that folly. Newspaper men know the difference between

"puff"-seeking and an honest, earnest effort to promote the kingdom.

How does a minister cultivate friendly relations? By giving them news—fresh, interesting news—whenever possible. By sending them accounts of any national matters pertaining to his denomination which have not appeared in the local press. By showing courtesy to the representatives of the press when they attend services with which he is connected. By brief, very brief, calls occasionally at the newspaper office. These are all legitimate methods, and when pursued with tact and the the same Christian courtesy shown in all other relations of life, will not fail to bring kind and cordial treatment from the press, such as will be of great value to the Church and its work.

We have known of preachers employing evangelists, and not sending a line to the local press concerning them or concerning the meetings. We have known them to send to a great distance for a speaker for a special occasion, and

not inform the public through the press either as to the occasion or the speaker. It is a violation of all common sense, and is unfair to the speakers who have taken the pains to come, while still more is it neglect to fulfill one's duty to the kingdom of Christ.

The late Hugh Price Hughes is quoted by David Williamson, editor of the *Examiner,* as saying: "We Free Churchmen are only gradually awakening to the value of the press. The Roman Catholic Church, with its usual astuteness, has set itself to train journalists, and so has the Salvation Army. We shall have to do the same, for the newspaper can help the Church marvelously." Any one who followed the career of Mr. Hughes knows that one of the secrets of his remarkable success was the pains he took to utilize the press in spreading information about his work, as well as in disseminating the opinions for which he so strenuously stood. And the press made him the best-known preacher to the man on the street in all England, thereby doubling his influence.

The whole subject of advertising the Church has been so well put by Mr. John A. Patten, of Chattanooga, Tenn., in his Epworth League pamphlet on the subject that we can not do better than to quote at length:

"Advertising does not create a demand, so much as it tells how to supply an existing demand. There is an almost universal desire to have what the Church stands for. Not every one recognizes or admits it, but the desire is there. Men want to be better. They want the sympathy of good people. The right publicity for religious work reminds the people that the Church is the place to go for what they want. To attract their attention, the Church should appeal to them through the mediums that are familiar.

"Expert advertising will not sell poor goods; neither will the most discriminating publicity do much for a Church that is not active and progressive. No advertising will take the place of the real spiritual life which the Church should have and the spiritual work which a

Church ought to do. But the usefulness of nearly every working Church could be increased by judicious publicity. The success of Mr. Moody's work and the Young Men's Christian Association movement demonstrates the power of the press as a co-operative religious agency. The newspaper is the most effective medium to reach the people. There are few intelligent American homes to which it does not go. Its influence on the thought and lives of the people is beyond estimate. No minister has an audience equal to that of any reputable newspaper published in his town. And many people estimate the Church as a religious and social force very largely by what the newspapers say about it. The newspaper can undoubtedly contribute very much to the success of the Church. A journalist of experience said to me: 'Newspapers always want bright, accurate, fresh religious news—not a repetition of stale facts, nor individual opinions, nor colored or inflated matter written for personal ends, but good, up-to-date news. And they are more pleased to

chronicle kindly actions, noble deeds, and high sentiments than they are to record crime and sensation.'

"Cultivate the newspapers. Help them obtain information about your work. Show them that you appreciate it when they do give the Church proper recognition. Give them credit for good intentions if they do not always say just what you might wish them to say. Courteously invite them to be present when anything of special importance occurs at your church. Give them every facility intelligently to chronicle what is happening. Usually, however, you will have to furnish them the news yourself. When you do that, write it out carefully. The newspaper man often has neither the time nor the information to do it. Much care and tact are necessary to prepare a satisfactory newspaper article. Many well-educated people seem utterly unable to prepare ten readable lines for publication. It is necessary to remember that you are writing from the standpoint of an impartial newspaper, and that the newspaper style

of terse statement must be followed. No paper will print, nor intelligent constituency read, dry, stereotyped platitudes. Look at your paper and you will notice a strong, 'catchy' sentence or two of introduction to nearly every article. Then should follow bright, accurate, definite statements of what was or is to be said or done.

"Consideration should always be shown newspapers in asking for favors. There are items about the work of an active Church every week that would be interesting; but where newspapers are crowded for space they can not always use them so often. Where you really have something to tell, however, and prepare the item attractively, it will nearly always be printed. Many city papers are glad to have at least a synopsis of Sunday sermons for the Monday issue. That gives a preacher a wider hearing than he could otherwise have, and it is helpful to the work. But the abstract should be carefully prepared. Perhaps five hundred heard the sermon, and ten thousand will read the paper.

"All services to which the public are invited should be announced in the newspapers. Nearly all papers have a column in which the regular Sunday services are announced free. If charge is made for it, that should not interfere with putting it in. A reasonable advertising appropriation is a legitimate item of current expense. Make your announcements plain, giving all needed information. These announcements are understood as coming directly from the Churches, and should always be dignified and accurate. Much can be gained by briefly announcing a special Sunday service in the newspapers about the middle of the preceding week.

"Blackboards can be used with good effect in making announcements. Made of wood or the prepared cloth, they can be obtained cheaply; and, displayed in the church vestry, near the entrance, or at any other conspicuous place, they will certainly secure attention. The lettering on the blackboard should be always neat and plain."

Many varieties of cards, invitations, etc.,

can be used to advantage, also. Most of our successful pastors in the cities use these freely, as a glance at the chapter on Sermon Series will show. Some pastors call an informal meeting of the men of the Church, and place in their hands the work of the distribution of these invitation-cards. Others have the cards arranged in packages of twenty-five, fifty, a hundred, and two hundred, and ask the members of the congregation generally to take them at the close of the service in such quantities as they can dispose of. It has been demonstrated that this not only secures the attention of the outside public to the sermons announced, but it enlists more heartily the interest and co-operation of the Church members who have been engaged in the work of advertising. And every pastor knows that the more of his people he can get into any kind of service for the Church, even as modest as the foregoing, the better it is for them and for the Church.

Very much of the interest in sermon announcements will depend upon the caption em-

ployed. For instance, "How the Inner Light Failed" attracted much more attention to Dr. Newell Hillis's sermon on Samson than if he had advertised it as "The Backslider" or "How Samson Fell from Grace." Dr. B. L. McElroy's announcement of the subject "Life's Sunset at Midday" brought a larger hearing than if he had announced the subject of "The Crucifixion." Of course, the matter of striking announcements can be overdone and degenerate into cheap sensationalism, but it is, nevertheless, true that the man who is going to get the largest hearing today and do the most good, is the man who can put old truths in a new, fresh, and inviting form. We have seen announcements of subjects that were not worth the paper they were printed on, so baldly didactic and commonplace was the putting of them.

The advertising matter should be of good material. Cheap goods and slovenly printing will do more harm than good. "Use good paper stock, and patronize a printer who will give you good type display and presswork. Use

plain, neat type-faces instead of gorgeous or fancy effects. Get only such quantities of any kind of literature as you can certainly use, and have that so attractive that it will be kept."

In cities and large towns it is well to have a committee whose business it is to visit the hotels on Saturday evening and leave a courteously-worded printed invitation to attend the services. A stock of these invitations can be kept on hand, so that the only work of the committee will be to secure the names of the guests from the register, place the cards in the envelopes, and properly address them. There are very few hotel clerks who will not willingly place these invitations in the "pigeon-holes" of the various guests. Opposite is a sample of the card used for this purpose by the Trinity Church of Louisville, Ky.

SUNDAY SERVICES.

Sunday School 9³⁰ a.m.
Preaching 11⁰⁰ and 7³⁰.
Epw. League 6³⁰ p.m.

Dear Friend:

If you are to remain in Louisville over the Sabbath we cordially invite you to attend services at

TRINITY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THIRD STREET.
[illegible] MAIN ST. AND CHESTNUT
[illegible] UNDER GUTHRIE

William F. Sheridan
PASTOR.

Chapter IV.

SEIZING STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES.

The alert preacher makes much of strategic opportunities. He is not careless of proprieties, but he is not afraid of doing things differently from his neighbors. He avoids ruts. He uses common-sense methods to meet the exigencies that arise from time to time. For instance, he takes advantage of an aroused public interest in any subject to teach moral and spiritual lessons from it. The Mount Pelee disaster furnishes him an opportunity to discuss the "Destruction of Sodom" and its lessons. The Galveston storm affords a striking illustration for a sermon on "Building on the Sands." A student murder in an evil resort gives him his text for a sermon on "The Temptations of Students." The proximity of election-day gives him his chance to draw lessons from Absalom's career

under the caption of "The Fall of a 'Swift' Politician."

"Sensational!" some one remarks. Not a bit of it. Simply common sense—taking advantage of an aroused public interest to drive home the truths of the gospel. It was Christ's method. When some told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, Jesus declared, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." When he saw the sower on the hillside, he used him as a text for a sermon on the varying soils and harvests of his spiritual seed. When they called his attention to the man born blind, Jesus used him as a text to enforce a great spiritual truth. The Pharisees choosing chief seats at a feast gave him his text for a sermon on pride, and the little child set in the midst, his text for a sermon on humility and faith.

Theatrical managers well understand the value of an aroused public interest, and they hasten to put a striking event, or a new story which has awakened general interest, into dra-

matic form, and on the boards, while the people and the papers are still talking about it. The newspapers have already advertised it. The public is prepared for it. The Church ought to be just as wise as the theater, and ought to seize these strategic opportunities to drive home God's message. If it be urged that people who come out of curiosity to hear an unusual theme will not be helped to a better life, we reply that that depends on the preacher. If he has a real message, the people who come from curiosity will be helped. At the close of the "current-event" sermon mentioned above on "The Fall of a 'Swift' Politician," four men and women came to the altar of prayer. At the close of the sermon on "The Temptations of Students," seven young men came forward as seekers of Christ. A great number of similar illustrations is at hand to show that the gospel does not lose its power to save simply because it is made interesting.

That Michigan preacher made use of a strategic opportunity when he noticed the circus com-

ing into town on Sunday morning as he went to church, and announced to his congregation a service for the afternoon on the circus grounds. He knew there would be a crowd of people wandering about those grounds, watching the unloading and erection of tents, and that he would have an opportunity of reaching people there who never darkened the door of his church. Nor was he disappointed, as the outcome showed. A large audience greeted him and his band of workers, a respectful hearing was given to his message and the testimony of the earnest Christian men who aided him, and several persons asked for prayer at the close; while some of the showmen said it was the first time they had heard the gospel preached in years.

Our English Wesleyan brethren are in advance of us in their use of these strategic opportunities. They preach more in the open air. They follow the crowds wherever there is an opportunity to get at them with a gospel service. Many such services are held at the race-tracks and on other amusement fields. And many are

the trophies they have won for the Master by these methods.

The writer confesses that he never approached an open-air service without dread. They have never ceased to be painful, and even humiliating, at the start, although they are a good deal like a cold bath in the lake: when the plunge has been taken, the feeling of dread gives way to a sense of exhilaration. It was Christ's method. He went where men were. He sat down with publicans and sinners. He scandalized the good people of his day by turning up in the most unexpected company—not for the sake of doing odd things and being peculiar, but for the sake of saving men. It appears to the writer that the Church's attitude is too much one of aloofness, rather than of sympathy. Not that the Church does not feel the sympathy and does not want the people; but that it is too much afraid of coming in contact with these people on their own ground. And, without meaning it, its attitude toward sinful men resembles that of the Pharisees and scribes

more than that of the Master. We confine ourselves too exclusively to the church buildings for religious services. We are too afraid of doing something unconventional—something for which we will be criticised by eminently respectable people. There is probably nothing that would so humiliate the average preacher or his congregation as to have it said that his methods resembled those of the Salvation Army. The methods suggested are not Salvation Army methods. The Army is an English institution and fits into conditions there much better than in America. But a preacher is cowardly if he is afraid to use methods that John Wesley and his co-laborers used with mighty success long before the Salvation Army was ever born, and that Jesus Christ used and set his seal on, simply because he is afraid of being classed with the Salvation Army type of Christian workers. But if it be that he will be thus sneered at, yet must we make it our chief business to seek out men wherever they congregate, and lead them to

Christ, and in this way "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."

When Hugh Price Hughes was pastor he astonished his highly respectable and staid congregation one day by announcing that on the following Sunday there would be no service in the church, except a very brief one in the morning, but that the services were to be held in a beautiful shady field near Magdalen College. We use Mr. Hughes's own language in describing it:

"On a lovely Sunday morning in June I marched from New Inn, Hall Street, with my stewards to the right and left of me; and a great retinue of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, who formed our admirable choir, followed, leading the singing most beautifully. Behind them came the whole of our congregation, who had never confessed Christ in that public way before. A great multitude of people collected out of curiosity, so that on that day I marched past Balliol College, over the very spot on

which the martyred bishops were burnt—the spot now marked by a cross—accompanied by at least two thousand people, and by all my Church officers. In fact, every one I knew was in the procession, except one of my own little daughters, who was too bashful to perform that way in public, even in the society of her father. With much self-consciousness she walked alone on the pavement, and tried, in vain, to look as though she had no connection with the processionists.

"It was a thrilling moment when two thousand Protestants, singing the hymns of the Reformation, marched triumphantly over the very spot where Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were burnt. Chairs and benches were provided in the beautiful field for those who could not stand; and in the city of Oxford, as in the villages, "Open-air Day" proved a great blessing, not only to multitudes who, under ordinary circumstances, would not hear the gospel at all, but to our own people, who needed to be shaken up from their false respectability, and

to be lifted out of the rut in which we are only too apt to sink."

In this incident is seen something of the spirit and methods of the man who saw in eighteen months, in conservative, scholarly Oxford and environs, fifteen hundred conversions. It was the remaking of Methodism in that part of England. And we see also the spirit and something of the methods which made Hugh Price Hughes the greatest leader English Methodism has had in a hundred years, and which produced the Forward Movement in England, and has given a new lease of life to Methodism in that land.

Rev. J. Gregory Mantle has well voiced the necessity of using at times strategic methods when he says:

"As the Church awakes to the fact that, between her and those who need her message the most, there is a great gulf fixed, she will see the necessity of leaving her stately buildings—sanctified bricks and mortar, some one has called them—and meeting these unreached multitudes

on ground with which they are more familair than she is."

Preachers who will hold services, bright and brief and attractive, in the parks or other places of open-air gatherings of the people, will find not only a respectful hearing there, but will find many of those who hear them there following them to their churches, and will win many a convert from their numbers.

Men know the difference between *dilettante* religion and downright, manly earnestness in religion—honest love for sinful men. The former they call "Churchianity," and despise it; the latter they call Christianity, and they respect it and believe in it.

Still another strategic method is the using of some building for Christian service which is not regularly employed for that purpose. For example, the congregation of the First Christian Church in Louisville, Ky., holds its evening service the first Sunday night in each month in a theater. The attendance is about double the ordinary congregation, and many of them are

people who rarely go to church. Those familiar with the facts know that it has done much to give the pastor, the Rev. Dr. E. L. Powell, a strong hold on the general public. There is a certain class of men in every community who will not attend services at the church, but who will go to hear a speaker at a theater or other place of popular secular concourse.

It is said that a Chicago Church, some years ago, whenever its pastor preached an unusually strong sermon, would rent a theater for the following Sunday night, and have the pastor repeat the sermon, with the result that a throng of people would be present, and the pastor would get a hold on many whom he had not previously known, and they would follow him to his church. The pastor is now an honored bishop.

Chapter V.

A SYMPOSIUM ON SERMON SERIES.

We present in this chapter the replies of a score of our leading preachers to the question we asked them as to what extent they have made use of a series of sermons in solving the Sunday-evening problem.

Willis P. Odell, pastor of Calvary Church, New York City, says: "I have made frequent use of the series idea for my Sunday-evening work, and always with success. . . . Here at Calvary our Sunday-evening audiences average from fifteen hundred to eighteen hundred. Once a month we put in a special musical service, and then we are crowded to overflowing. I inclose a few cards to give you an idea of the way we advertise, and also of the subjects introduced."

Charles Bayard Mitchell, of First Church,

Cleveland, Ohio: "I inclose several series of Sunday-night sermons. I sometimes preach a series, first getting cards printed and distributed. I magnify my evening service. Preach the best I know how. Have always had larger night than morning audiences."

Robert McIntyre, First Church, Los Angeles, Cal.: "I have found a Sunday-evening course of sermons on 'The Six Creative Days' very popular, having to repeat it in the same church within five years. I have also had success with a course on 'The Model Home,' taking up 'The Model Father,' 'The Model Mother,' 'Wife,' 'Husband,' 'Son,' etc. Also have had overflowing houses to a series on 'Religious Lessons from the Seven Scenic Wonders of America,' and likewise a series on 'Spiritual Lessons from the Lives of Greatest Americans.'"

J. M. Thoburn, Jr., Calvary Church, Allegheny, Pa.: "I have not yet solved the problem of the Sunday-evening congregation. Every Church and community presents some new phase of the question. There is nothing so attractive

as the simple gospel, and yet even the gospel must needs be reclad to secure the hearing we desire. Sometimes I use a series of sermons—never more than three. Sometimes an address in a praise service. And, two or three times each year, I use a stereopticon. A platform-meeting, the pastor in charge, with three bright addresses from three young men of the congregation, once a year, takes well. Or, a platform-meeting, with a brief address from each society of the Church, never fails to interest."

S. Parkes Cadman, Central Congregational Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.: "In my preaching on Sunday evenings I have seldom adopted the popular habit of a series of sermons, and I have not hitherto advertised my subjects ahead. Some few years ago, when I was a pastor in Yonkers, N. Y., I preached a series of sermons upon 'The Prodigal Son,' which met with some success, and were repeated by request. When I came to New York to the Metropolitan Temple I preached them again, and once more they were asked for; so that on two successive occasions

I have repeated these sermons. In my present pastorate I introduced a series, last winter, of Old Testament characters, which ran for several weeks, and secured some approval. Apart from these exceptions, my general rule has been to follow my own free will, and simply state that I would be there to preach. One of the successful methods of Sunday-night work is a first-rate musical service. Hugh Price Hughes's magnificent campaign in London, where he gathered a large congregation in St. James Hall—one of the most difficult situations in the metropolis—was due to the fact that he had a splendid orchestra of sixty or more performers, playing with balance and refinement and devotional feeling. In my church at the Metropolitan Temple I employed a smaller orchestra with good results. I am of opinion that music upon a larger scale, and, where possible, discarding cheap tunes and using a larger range of instrumentalism than is now common, would be of great assistance to many of our pastors who are now struggling with this problem of Sunday-evening congregations.

Let it be subordinate to the preaching, but let it be. Of course, there are other items, such as prompt seating, courteous ushering, hymns which are popular," etc.

Charles Edward Locke, Delaware Avenue Church, Buffalo, N. Y.: "I have used the series idea in my sermon-making, especially for the Sunday-evening service, all through my ministry, and always to the apparent interest of my congregations. . . . I do not always follow the subjects on consecutive nights, but introduce other themes as occasion may demand. I find that such a series not only increases interest and attendance in the congregation, but it is most stimulating to the preacher in his studies and reading. It is rare, in these recent years, that I feel 'preached out.' As early as Tuesday of each week I find my elasticity has returned, and I am keen to get into the study for my next Sabbath's preparation. However, I think I ought to say, inasmuch as you have asked for my experience, that I am constantly reading the Gospels, especially dwelling upon the words of

Christ. I am finding that the exhaustless fountain of sermonic material and the spirit of preaching are in our Lord himself. My New Testament was never so invaluable as now, and no subject so charms a large audience as Jesus."

C. L. Goodell, Hanson Place Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.: "I send you two series of biographical sermons which were much appreciated. It is a great inspiration to me to see the young people crowd the Sunday-night series. But more important than the crowd is the purpose for which they come. The service that wins some for Christ from a church half filled is better than a crowded church with no Christ to bless the crowd."

Camden M. Cobern, St. James Church, Chicago, Ill.: "The Sunday-night service is a different problem in different localities. When I was in Ann Arbor a series of sermons on any great, living, theological question or social question would draw crowds. In a downtown church—such as Trinity Church, Denver—it was necessary to touch some social topic, or a

question in which business men were interested, in order to draw the crowd. A series which was not only popular, but brought many people into the Church was built on the topic, 'If I had My Life to Live Over.' Questions were sent out to the leading men in the city, and their replies were utilized in the discussion. Another series which drew the music-loving people was 'The Gospel in Great Oratorios.' I am now preparing a series on 'Religious Opinions of our Great Statesmen.' "

William A. Quayle, Grand Avenue Church, Kansas City, Mo.: "I never preach series of sermons. I do not care to be hampered in that way. I preach as the theme catches me, and like to leave the hour open to any new inroad of the wind of God. For like reasons, among others, I never publish topics for a Sunday. I might change my mind. I have no recipe for a Sunday-evening service save this, always: 'Preach the gospel and take themes from the Bible, because it is our Book, and because it is the parent of the most varied thought and in-

tellectual stimulus I know. Indeed, there is nothing to approach it, even on that side. My belief grows, if possible, that if the people will not come to hear a man preach the gospel, they will not come to hear that man preach anything. Some people will not go to hear anybody preach. Others will not go to hear some of us preach. So here are our limitations."

Albert B. Storms, First Church, Des Moines, Ia.: "I find a series of subjects for Sunday evenings adds to interest. It also helps the preacher—avoids casting about in the midst of a chaos of half-formulated themes for the right one each week. Have preached this year on 'The Ten Commandments and the Ethics of Jesus.' The outline of subjects is so readily suggested, based on the Commandments in Exodus and the Sermon on the Mount, as to make further outline unnecessary. Have also taken themes in serial order from messages to the Seven Churches of Asia."

George Elliott, Central Church, Detroit, Mich.: "I have never had special trouble as to

the Sunday-evening service, and have no theories to advance. My plan is to make that service warmly evangelistic, and not to make the mistake of unduly abbreviating it. Give full time to the service of worship, and preach an hour if you feel like it and have a message."

Edwin H. Hughes, late pastor of Center Church, Malden, Mass: "Both of my pastorates, since leaving the seminary, have been in Massachusetts and in the near suburbs of Boston. In both places the Sunday-evening service had become a problem. In the first case, it was held in the vestry. Later the audience overflowed somewhat into the main room. Then we moved the service into the regular auditorium. After due time the audience overflowed back into the vestry again and we filled both rooms. In my present charge we have maintained a large evening service for more than seven years. It is held in the main room of the church, and is as largely attended as the morning service. Nothing that even resembles sensationalism has been em-

ployed; not even current events have been exploited to excite interest. The subjects have all been eternal. The meeting has been run on its essential merits; I very seldom preach half an hour; the service is just an hour long. It has been the recruiting ground of the Church. In my own opinion, no Church can have a wide reach toward the outside multitudes save through a strong evening service. The whole problem has seemed to me one of leadership, both lay and pastoral. If the influential laymen of the local Church attend the evening service and feel and urge its importance, the solution is near at hand. This all presumes that the pastor will not slur or skimp the second service. If he puts all of his preparation into the morning sermon, and allows Sunday afternoon for a hasty scraping together of fragments for an evening discourse, the public will soon take the service at his estimate. The little sermon will get a little audience. We receive here the measure that we give. In these matters action and reaction are more nearly equal than

men suppose. Unquestionably, the impression is now abroad in many communities that the *second* service is a *second-rate service.* Of course, when people feel thus they are not likely to give it a full and eager attendance. Every pastor, in adroit and quiet ways, should discourage the idea that the morning meeting is utterly primary. We have so long given to it the deeper services of the Church, such as the Holy Communion and the reception of members, that many of our people regard the evening meeting as meant for outsiders. Our preaching often emphasizes the like view. We preach growing sermons in the morning and planting sermons in the evening. The saints who come in the evening hear a sermon for sinners; and the sinners who come in the morning hear a sermon for saints. It is well to change the order occasionally. For, when the sinners begin to take the evening service at the value placed on it by the saints, our problem is on in full force. Let once the understanding spread abroad that the preacher does just as good work in the evening

as in the morning; let it be frequently reported that those not at the evening service have 'missed' it, and soon the tide will set toward the second service again. If these principles seem academic and scarcely applicable to certain communities, I can only say that they have worked unfailingly in all my pastorates, which have been in widely different communities."

Frost Craft, Trinity Church, Denver: "I have seldom preached series of sermons. I have steadily preached the gospel in the evenings, following the general plan of preaching to the Church in the morning, and to the unconverted in the evening. The results in my own case have been more satisfactory in the long run than by the use of sensational methods."

P. H. Swift, Wesley Church, Chicago: "I have always struck for an evening congregation. My evening congregation now is much larger than my morning. That has been the case at Court Street (Rockford), Englewood, and Wesley. The inclosed series, on 'Heroes and Heroines.' was especially for young people. I gave

out cards by the hundreds in the Church, and then had them put in every house within ten blocks of the church, and on Saturday of each week. Sometimes I put out special 'dodgers.' The most popular Sunday-evening series I ever gave was a series on 'After Death, What?' The themes were: (1) The Rational Grounds for Belief in Immortality; (2) What the Bible has to Say about Immortality; (3) Life Beyond the Grave; (4) Shall We Know Our Friends in Heaven? I am now using the stereopticon with great success for Sunday-night work. I try to be something more than a shower of pictures. I gave one series on 'The Story of Jesus Christ.' The work was very popular. I am now at work on 'In the Footsteps of St. Paul.' I take the congregation on a tour of the lands Paul visited; tell them all about the places; give as many illustrations as possible; put the Epistles in their proper places in the Book of Acts, etc. I take about five evenings for the Missionary Journeys. I find many places where I can preach a short, sharp sermon; some-

times close with a ten-minute sermon after the stereopticon has done its work, and we have reached some place or incident where we can well pause for such work. One can, once a quarter, give a review of the Sunday-school lessons with the stereopticon, and make it immensely practical and popular. It is worth everything to get the young people of the Sunday-school out on Sunday evening, and we are getting them. I have given several other series, many of them specially evangelistic. Last year I got good results by getting one hundred of my young people to do their very best to get one person to the Sunday-evening service each week, and to pray for them before coming, that the gospel might reach them *that very night.*"

Edward S. Ninde, Ann Arbor, Mich.: "I have always found that the congregations are larger and the results in every way more satisfactory when I preach sermons in series. The 'Short Talks to Men of Business' carried me through one hot summer. Another summer I preached a series on what I called 'Fresh-air

Subjects,' taking such themes as 'The Lakes and Rivers of the Bible,' 'The Mountains of the Bible,' 'The Flowers,' 'Birds,' 'Trees,' etc., of the Bible. While some of these subjects do not seem to bear upon the Bible, yet in the sermons themselves it has been constantly my chief purpose to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and to lead to the conversion of souls."

Charles A. Crane, People's Temple, Boston, Mass.: "Our Sunday-night congregations average about fifteen hundred, and our membership is about four hundred, so that we have no problem save that of securing the conversion of those attending. I inclose a sample of a series which proved very popular. The great themes seem to attract better than what may be called current topics."

Joshua Stansfield, Meridian Street, Indianapolis, Ind.: "In four out of five important charges I have served I have found that series of sermons for Sunday nights have been much appreciated and decidedly valuable to the Church, to a fair portion of the public, and to

myself. I have given series on 'The Gospel in Genesis,' 'The Words of the Master,' and several series from 'Old Testament Characters,' which have always proved interesting and helpful. I believe that Old Testament biography is a most fruitful text for effective preaching to-day."

Chapter VI.

SOME SUCCESSFUL SERMON SERIES.

BY WILLIS P. ODELL, CALVARY CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY.

Those Holy Mountains.

1. Quarantana—The Mount of Temptation.
2. Hattin—The Mount of Beatitudes.
3. Hermon—The Mount of Transfiguration.
4. Calvary—The Mount of Crucifixion.
5. Olivet—The Mount of Ascension.

Sermons to Young Men.

1. Why Should a Young Man Become a Christian?
2. The Things that Hinder Young Men from Becoming Christians.
3. What if All Young Men in New York Should Come to Christ?

4. How May a Young Man Maintain a Christian Life?

TONGUES OF FIRE.

1. Knox—The Fearless Scotch Reformer.
2. Whitefield—The Wonderful English Evangelist.
3. Taylor—The Eccentric Sailor Preacher.
4. Simpson—The Eloquent Methodist Bishop.

THE STORY OF A WONDERFUL LIFE.

1. A Youth at Court.
2. The Fiery Furnace.
3. A Banquet in a Palace.
4. In a Lion's Den.

BY CHARLES L. GOODELL, HANSON PLACE CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

SUPREME QUESTIONS FOR THINKING PEOPLE.*

1. The Life Superb.
2. The Victory Supreme.
3. What Really Happened Two Hundred Years Ago.

*Each of these sermons was published and gratuitously distributed the Sunday following delivery.

Bible Biographies.

1. Great Soldiers of the Bible.
2. Great Statesmen of the Bible.
3. Heathen Heroines.
4. Young Men of the New Testament.
5. The Heroines of Jesus.

God's Heroes.

1. Savonarola, the Florentine Patriot.
2. Martin Luther, the Hero of the German Reformation.
3. General Gordon, the Hero of Khartoum.
4. John Knox, the Hero of Scotland.
5. John Bunyan, the Dreamer of Bedford Jail.
6. John Wesley, the Hero of Methodism.

BY CAMDEN M. COBERN, ST. JAMES CHURCH, CHICAGO, ILL.

Short Sermons on Great Subjects.

1. God.
2. The Trinity.
3. The Fall.
4. The Atonement.

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

1. Jesus as a Preacher.
2. The Young Rabbi.
3. The Ideal Man.
4. Jesus as a Controversialist.
5. The Miracle Worker.
6. The Builder of Christianity.
7. Questions Suggested by Preceding Sermons Answered.

THE EGYPTIAN MONUMENTS OF THE BIBLE.

1. The Whisperings of the Sphinx.
2. The Stones Crying Out.
3. Some Skeptical Objections Buried by the Excavator's Spade.
4. Question-box Lecture.

OLD TESTAMENT BIBLE STORIES RE-EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN RESEARCH.

1. The Creation.
2. Adam and Eve.
3. The Garden of Eden.
4. The Apple and the Serpent.
5. Noah and the Flood.

6. The Tower of Babel.
7. Jonah and the Whale.
8. Question-box Lecture.

BY CHARLES BAYARD MITCHELL, FIRST CHURCH, CLEVELAND, O.

THE YOUNG MAN.

1. The Young Man and His Influence.
2. The Young Man and His Ambitions.
3. The Young Man and His Conscience.
4. The Young Man and His Master.

FOUR BESETTING SINS OF YOUNG WOMEN.

1. Lack of Self-reliance.
2. Selfishness.
3. Vanity.
4. Frivolity.

FOUR BESETTING SINS OF YOUNG MEN.

1. Gambling.
2. Skepticism.
3. Intemperance.
4. Dishonesty.

ABOUT A MAN.

1. What is It to Be a Man?
2. Is It Easy to Be a Man?
3. Does It Pay to Be a Man?
4. The Average Man.
5. The Devil and a Man.
6. The Winning Man.
7. Wanted—a Man!
8. Be a Man.

HIGHWAYS TO HELL.

1. The Amusement Highway.
2. The Money Highway.
3. The Self-indulgent Highway.
4. The Drink Highway.
5. The Skeptic Highway.

BY CHARLES EDWARD LOCKE, DELAWARE AVENUE CHURCH, BUFFALO, N. Y.

POPULAR INQUIRIES CONCERNING GREAT GOSPEL TRUTHS.

1. Shall Many or Few Be Saved?
2. How Far is Conscience a Safe Guide?

3. Some Reasons for a Future Life Independent of the Bible.
4. What is the Need of Prayer when God Knows Our Needs before We ask Him?
5. Did Jesus Christ Claim to Be God?
6. "Did God Make Man or did Man Make God?"
7. Is the Union of the Churches Probable and Practicable? And, in that Event, what Advantages would Accrue?
8. What Shall Be the Nature of Our Resurrection Body, and Shall We Know Each Other There?
9. Is Poverty Necessary to Character?

Is the World Getting Better?

1. Morals.
2. Unbelief.
3. Achievements of Evangelical Christianity.
4. Danger Signals. These include (1) Licensed Vice; (2) Secularization of the Sabbath; (3) Mammon in the Church; (4) Cowardliness among Christians.

5. Danger Signals. (Part II.) (1) Family Foes; (2) Foes of the Public School; (3) Demagogues in Politics; (4) Neglect of the Eleventh Commandment; (5) Substitutes for the Simple, Old-fashioned Gospel.
6. Concluding Observations. (1) Increasing Tide of Christian Faith; (2) The Kingdom of Christ's Triumph in this Dispensation; (3) High Valuation Placed on Human Life; (4) Democracy Not a Failure; (5) Christianity Getting Ready to Throw Off the Chains of Vice.

BY POLEMUS H. SWIFT, WESLEY CHURCH, CHICAGO.

THE VALLEY OF BLESSINGS; OR, PEARLS FROM THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

1. Green Pastures and Still Waters.
2. Paths of Righteousness.
3. Light in the Dark Valley.
4. Cups that Run Over.
5. Two Angels on the Path of Life.

Sundays Over the Sea.

1. Rome, or Religion and Ecclesiasticism.
2. Paris, or Religion and Pleasure.
3. London, or Religion and Commerce.
4. The Ecumenical Conference, or Conquests of World-wide Methodism.
5. Berlin, or the Gospel of the Dresden Gallery.

Messages from the Preacher-Poets of America.

1. Bryant, the Pioneer.
2. Whittier, the Quaker Poet of Freedom.
3. Spiritual Messages from the Poetry of Longfellow.

Gospel Voices from Beyond the Sea.

1. Revelations of Campo Santo.
2. The Glories of the Sistine Chapel.
3. The Gospel of the World's Greatest Ruin.
4. Spiritual Voices from the Romantic Rhine.
5. Great Cathedrals as Religious Teachers.

BY GEORGE ELLIOTT, CENTRAL CHURCH, DETROIT, MICH.

The Lord's Prayer.

1. Our Father.
2. Our Father's Name.
3. Our Father's Kingdom.
4. Our Father's Will.
5. Our Father's Giving.
6. Our Father's Forgiving.
7. Our Father's Guidance.
8. Our Father's Deliverance.
9. Our Father's Praise.

Elijah.

1. The Prophet Appears.
2. The Prophet Retires.
3. The Prophet Reappears.
4. The Prophet Prays.
5. The Prophet Despairs.
6. The Prophet Vindicates Private Right.
7. The Prophet Ascends.

Joseph the Dreamer.

1. The Dreamer.
2. The Dreamer a Slave.
3. The Dreamer in Prison.
4. The Dreamer Exalted.
5. The Dream Comes True.

BY EDWARD S. NINDE, ANN ARBOR, MICH.

Talks to Young Men.

1. Wanted—A Man.
2. Heart to Heart.
3. Getting to the Top.
4. Danger Signals.
5. "God's Gentleman."
6. A Paying Partnership.

From the Nile to the Jordan.

1. The Mummies of Egypt.
2. Afloat on the Nile.
3. A Prince or a Slave.
4. Pharaoh on Trial.
5. A Wall of Water.
6. In the Land of Silence.

7. Heaven Touching Earth.
8. A Drop of Poison.
9. Mount Pisgah's Lofty Height.

SHORT TALKS TO MEN OF BUSINESS.

1. Luke, the Physician.
2. Zebedee, the Fisherman.
3. Elisha, the Farmer.
4. Zenas, the Lawyer.
5. Cornelius, the Soldier.
6. Jubal, the Musician.
7. Abel, the Shepherd.
8. Nimrod, the Hunter.
9. Ahithophel, the Politician.
10. Levi, the Customs Officer.

BY CHARLES A. CRANE, PEOPLE'S TEMPLE, BOSTON.

CONSTRUCTIVE SERMONS ON THE PILLARS OF OUR FAITH.

1. The Resurrection.
2. The Atonement.
3. Miracles.
4. Conversion.

5. The Incarnation.
6. Heaven and Hell.

BY JAMES M. THOBURN, JR., CALVARY CHURCH, ALLEGHENY, PA.

Epidemic Delusions.

1. Spiritualism. "Bring Me Up Samuel."
2. Theosophy. "As Jannes and Jambres Withstood Moses, So do These Resist the Truth."
3. Christian Science. "Refuse Profane and Old Wives' Fables."

Neglected Topics.

1. Sin.
2. The Devil.
3. Hell.

Oriental Religions.

1. Hinduism and Christianity. "Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship."
2. Buddha and Christ. "He was not that Light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

3. The False and the True Prophet. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

BY B. L. M'ELROY, BROAD STREET CHURCH, COLUMBUS, O.

THE COMMON PEOPLE'S CHRIST.

1. What a Homeless Man did for the Home.
2. Christ's Illumination of Poverty.
3. A Man of Sympathy in a World of Sorrow.

IN PERILS OF THE CITY.

1. Lost in the Crowd.
2. The Hidden Light.
3. False Cosmopolitanism.

BY JOSHUA STANSFIELD, MERIDIAN STREET CHURCH, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

THE CREED OF CHRISTENDOM.

1. The Fatherhood of God. "I believe in God the Father."
2. The Divineness of Jesus. "And in Jesus Christ His only Son.

3. The Dignity of Human Life. "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."
4. Life and Judgment. "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead."
5. The True Church. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church."
6. The Life Beyond. "The resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

SOME ESSENTIAL CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES.

1. God—The Effect of a Proper Conception on Character.
2. Law—Its Nature and Intent.
3. Sin—Is It Weakness, or Worse?
4. Salvation—A Bold Word.
5. The Christian — An Incarnation of the Christ Doctrine and Life.
6. Human Destiny—Whither, and What?

BY ALBERT B. STORMS, FIRST CHURCH, DES MOINES, IA.

THE GATES OF NEW LIFE.

1. Out of Darkness into His Marvelous Light.
2. Not Disobedient to the Heavenly Vision.

3. The Rich Young Ruler. "He went away sorrowful."
4. A Son of Thunder Transformed.

THE LIFE OF PAUL.

1. "When I was a Child."
2. Farewell to Saul: a New Man.
3. In the Desert of Arabia.
4. An Encounter with a Sorcerer.
5. Stoned and Worshiped.
6. A Rebuke and a Quarrel.
7. Songs in a Dungeon.
8. Preaching on Mars' Hill.
9. Stirring Times in Ephesus.
10. Jerusalem in an Uproar.
11. A Man Before a King.
12. A Night and a Day in the Deep.

MESSAGES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

1. An invitation to Backsliders.
2. The Crown of Life on the Brow of Poverty.
3. The Hidden Manna in the Very Place Where Satan's Seat Is.
4. The Deep Things of Satan.

5. The White Garments of the Saints who Persevere.
6. The City of Brotherly Love.
7. The Miserable and Poor and Blind and Naked who Thought They Were Rich.
8. The Invitation of Mercy.

BY LUTHER FREEMAN, FIRST CHURCH, CHATTANOOGA, TENN.

THREE SERMONS ABOUT YOU.

1. Where Did You Come From?
2. What Are You Here For?
3. Where are You Going?

(PREACHED AT WALTHAM, MASS., THE "WATCH-TOWN.")

THE WATCH.

1. The Main Spring.
2. The Balance Wheel.
3. The Jewels.
4. The Adjustment.
5. The Testing Room.

TO YOUNG MEN.

1. The Young Man from the Country.
2. The Young Man and the City.

3. The Young Man and His Friends.
4. The Young Man and His Habits.
5. The Young Man and His Brotherhood.
6. Opportunities for Young Men in Chattanooga.

THE GOSPEL OF THE HUMAN BODY.

1. The Eye.
2. The Ear.
3. The Hand.
4. The Tongue.
5. The Heart.

BY EDWIN H. HUGHES, LATE PASTOR OF CENTER CHURCH, MALDEN, MASS., NOW PRESIDENT OF DE PAUW UNIVERSITY.

THE FIGURES OF SPEECH IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

1. The Salt of the Earth. Matt. v, 13.
2. The Light of the World. Matt. 5, 14.
3. The Right Hand Sin. Matt. v, 30.
4. The Left Hand Sin, Ignorance. Matt. vi, 3.
5. The Treasure and the Heart. Matt. vi, 21.
6. The Eye of the Soul. Matt. vi, 22.

7. The Cubit unto the Stature. Matt. vii, 27.
8. The Measure and Its Return. Matt. vii, 1.
9. The Beam in the Eye. Matt. vii, 3.
10. The Pearls before the Swine. Matt. vii, 6.
11. Bread or a Stone. Matt. vii, 9.
12. The Tree and Its Fruit. Matt. vii, 18.
13. The House and Its Builder. Matt. vii, 24 ff.

THE REGULAR CHURCH SERVICE AS A MEANS OF GRACE.

1. Introductory: Reverence for the Sanctuary.
2. Singing as a Means of Grace.
3. Prayer as a Means of Grace.
4. Bible-reading as a Means of Grace.
5. Giving as a Means of Grace.
6. Hearing as a Means of Grace.

The effort in this series was simply to inform with meaning the different parts in the Church order of service.

SOME ATTRIBUTES OF GOD, AND THEIR PRACTICAL BEARING ON LIFE.

1. Introductory: Changed by Looking into God's Character. 2 Cor. iii, 18.

2. The Knowledge of God. Prov. xv, 3.
3. The Presence of God. Psa. cxxxix, 7.
4. The Power of God. Mark x, 27.
5. The Justice of God. Job viii, 3.
6. The Love of God. 1 John iv, 8.

BY FAYETTE L. THOMPSON, CENTRAL CHURCH, DAVENPORT, IA.

ART AND FAITH.

1. Murillo's "Immaculate Conception," or the Divine Fatherhood.
2. Raphael's Sistine Madonna, or The Human Motherhood.
3. Hoffman's "Christ Among the Doctors," or Foregleams of Wisdom.
4. "The Transfiguration," or The Irresistible Glory.
5. Hoffman's "Gethsemane," or Obedience unto Death.
6. Ender's "He Has Risen," or Immortality Assured.

WHAT IS IT TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

1. The World's Answer.
2. The Bible Test.

3. The Prayer Test.
4. The Good Works Test.
5. The Holy Spirit Test.

The Crisis of Youth.

To young men:

1. The Young Man and Personal Purity.
2. The Young Man and Crime.
3. The Young Man and the Legalized Liquor-traffic.
4. The Young Man and Another Young Man.

To young women:

1. The Young Woman and Her Tongue.
2. The Young Woman and Her Mother.
3. The Young Woman and Pleasure.
4. The Young Woman and Her Future Husband.

Marriage.

1. Wedlock: The Divine Program.
2. Courtship: The Best Foot Forward.
3. Mated, or Whom to Marry.
4. Husbandhood: Strong with the Strength of Ten.

5. Wifehood: Because the Heart is Pure.
6. Parentage: A Partnership with God.
7. Home: The Earthly Heaven.
8. Heaven: The Eternal Home.

BY WILBUR F. SHERIDAN, TRINITY CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, KY.

THE GROWING CHRIST.

1. The Interrupted Rapture of Mary.
2. The Influence of Environment on the Early Development of Jesus.
3. The Triple Test on the Mountains.
4. Christ's Inaugural: A Gospel of Sympathy.
5. The Waxing and Waning of Christ's Popularity.
6. "Back to Christ" as the one Standard of Doctrine and Life.
7. Christ's Self-sacrificing Love the Method of Redemption.
8. The Joy of a Finished Work.

NEW PORTRAITS FROM AN OLD-TIME GALLERY.

1. A Crownless King (Moses).
2. The Fall of a "Swift" Politician (Absalom).

3. The Dead March of Saul.
4. A Bow that Never Turned Back (Jonathan).
5. An Apprenticeship to a Throne (David).
6. A Hero Playing with Fire (Samson).
7. A Country Lad in a Crowded City (Daniel). Repeated by request.
8. The Song-heralded Son of David (Jesus).

Six Modern Devils.

1. The Bad Literature Devil.
2. The Gossip Devil.
3. The Pleasure Devil.
4. The Gambling Devil.
5. The Liquor Devil.
6. The Greed-for-gold Devil.

Young Women Who Dared.

1. A Sister's Devotion and What Came of It (Miriam).
2. A Working Girl's Exaltation (Ruth).
3. The Wife who Saved the Farm (Abigail).
4. A Woman in League with the Devil (Jezebel).
5. The Maid who Delivered Her People (Esther).

Chapter VII.

A PLAN THAT REACHED MEN.

In 1897 the author tried an experiment with a view to securing the attention and attendance of irreligious men upon a series of sermons. The place was a Michigan town of ten thousand people. The experiment proved so successful that he used it a second time, in 1902, in Louisville, Ky. Again it worked so well that he gives it here, believing that it is usable in any community after a pastor has gotten sufficiently acquainted to be in touch with a considerable number of non-church-going men. We may add that the meetings growing out of this method resulted in the conversion of enough men in each of the cities to have made a respectable official board, both as regards numbers and quality. The plan was to send letters

to a hundred men who were not members of the Church, which read as follows:

"Dear Sir,—Pardon the liberty I take in addressing you, but I am anxious to secure your opinion as to why the great majority of Louisville men are not actively interested in Church work. I am a preacher, and naturally look at it from a preacher's viewpoint; but I covet the privilege of looking at it through your eyes. If it is not asking too much, will you make a suggestion or two on the following points:

"1. Why are not more men members of the Church?

"2. Are the Churches of your acquaintance really doing the work you believe the Church of Christ was founded to accomplish?

"3. What do you consider the most helpful features of Church life to-day?

"I am writing to a number of gentlemen about this, and their answers, I am frank to say, will form the basis of a series of sermons I hope to preach at Trinity Church, beginning Novem-

ber 24th. Your communication will be considered strictly confidential. Should you be able to attend the series of sermons, I assure you that you will not be personally addressed on the subject of religion. Thanking you in advance for the favor, I am

"Respectfully yours,

"Wilbur F. Sheridan."

Replies came from all classes of men—working men, business men, and professional men. Some men whose reputation is nation-wide wrote frankly and fully in reply. Although not more than twenty-five per cent responded by letter, others replied verbally, and altogether they furnished an entirely adequate basis for the series of sermons. Still others, who did not answer at all, were among those who united with the Church as a result of the services. The newspapers took up the matter, and gave hearty and generous advertising to it, thus bringing the services to the attention of the entire city.

In reply to the question, "What do you consider the most helpful feature of Church life to-day?" there was striking unanimity in the replies. Almost without exception it was, "The training of the children in the Sunday-school." The second question, "Are the Churches of your acquaintance really doing the work you believe the Church of Christ was founded to accomplish?" received qualified replies, as a rule. None answered decidedly in the affirmative. None absolutely in the negative. The consensus of opinion was that the Churches were falling very far short of measuring up to their opportunities and of really imitating Christ's methods and spirit. The following letter from a man of large influence and prominence in the city will suggest the direction which many criticisms took:

"Rev. W. F. Sheridan, Louisville Ky.:

"My Dear Sir,—Replying *seriatim* to the interrogatories contained in your letter of the 15th, and premising my answers with the obser-

vation that any reply must necessarily be largely predicated upon one's individual observations, I beg to state:

"1. In the rural districts the excess of female over male members of the Church is not so marked as in the city districts. It would appear that the reason for this state of affairs in the city is due to the fact that in them Church influences do not reach the males because of the various forms of amusements, the social side of life with its attractions, and because men are so engrossed with business cares that the matter of their souls' salvation becomes to many a secondary consideration.

"2. I no not believe that the Churches are effecting the work for which the Christian Church was established. It would seem to be the ambition of our local Churches, at least, to vie with one another in erecting the most costly, commodious, and fashionable buildings for Church worship, and to limit the attendance at these Churches to those of their own particular 'set,' little or no effort having been made to

reach the 'low and lowly' element, which class vastly outnumbers the 'rich and holy' class. Can you imagine a poor, ragged, penniless sinner receiving a welcome in any of our ultra fashionable churches? . . .

"3. The answer to the second renders unnecessary reply to your third question. Direct, intimate, personal contact with sinners, and heart to-heart communion with them is, in my judgment, the most helpful feature of Church life, and, I may add, the rarest.

"Very respectfully, ———."

Classifying the replies received, we deduced the following subjects for the series of sermons:

TEN STUMBLING-STONES TO RELIGION IN LOUISVILLE.

1. The Kind of Religion that is "Played Out."
2. Contradictions in Teaching Among the Churches.
3. The Church Not Abreast of Scientific Advance.
4. The Hypocrites in the Church.

5. Unsociability and Neglect of the Toilers.
6. The Stress of Business Life and Methods.
7. I am Good Enough Without Religion.
8. I am Afraid I can not Hold Out.
9. Caught in the Swirl of Self-indulgence.
10. I am Waiting Until I can Reach the Standard.

The sermon on "The Church Not Abreast of Scientific Advance" was afterwards repeated at the request of some physicians. Among the conversions were business men, professional men, and working men. One of the most gratifying results of the series of sermons was the increased interest and friendliness of many men in the city toward Trinity Church.

Chapter VIII.

HOLDING THE PEOPLE.

"What we want is a preacher who will draw."

It was the chairman of a committee on the lookout for a new preacher who uttered these words, and the rest of the committee echoed his sentiment—"a preacher who will draw." They were talking to the editor of a Chicago religious journal, who was supposed to be in touch with the leading preachers of his denomination. Whatever other qualities the committee mentioned as they discussed the needs of the Church and the man whom they wanted, they always came back to the emphatic assertion: "What we want is a man that will draw." The editor knew the Church whose committee was before him, and he was a courageous man, so he re-

plied by looking at the committee very straight and saying: "O no, brethren! what you need is not a preacher that will draw, but a Church that will hold."

He then went on to remind the committee of the multitude of strangers who had gone through that fashionable Church never to return. He was brave enough to tell them that it was the Church's unsociability and indifference—yea, selfishness—which had driven away the very people they were talking about getting a preacher to "draw." He reminded them that they had had opportunity to make several congregations as large as their own if they had been brotherly enough and unselfish enough to give themselves to those strangers, both in hearty greetings and in watch-care for their souls. And when that committee left that editorial sanctum they were a wiser, if a less complacent committee.

We know of a Church where a new pastor had succeeded in filling up the vacant benches. People were being converted and accessions were

numerous. The pastor's heart was beating high with hope and zeal. One day he said to a venerable brother who had led in the financial management of the Church for many years: "Well, Brother Blank, the Church is filling up, is n't it?" There was no responsive glow in the face of the old man as he replied: "Yes, but who are these people? We do n't know them. They are not our kind of people. Some of us are feeling as if we were crowded out." Had the enthusiastic young pastor received a blow he could not have been more staggered and pained. He saw the handwriting on the wall. He knew that, notwithstanding the splendid success he was having, judged from any reasonable viewpoint, he would never be able to run the gauntlet of the fourth Quarterly Conference if the leader of the Church Board felt thus toward his work. Accordingly he began to look up his book boxes, and get hammer and nails ready. At Conference-time he departed for pastures new, and the Church resumed its interrupted condition of

dignified isolation and graveyard loneliness amid the swarming multitudes of a downtown location.

An Epworth League once came under our notice whose working force had been small for several years, as there were not many young people in the Church. The group of leaders had come to be fond of each other, which was very commendable. But when, at length, a large number of new converts came into the Church the group of "old guard" Leaguers was oblivious of it. When the devotional meeting or business session was over the same old cronies got together for a good, jolly time, unmindful of the strangers and new comers who hovered wistfully on the periphery of the charmed circle. And those new comers turned away, disappointed at first, and then bitter, at the manifest selfishness of a company of young Christian leaders who were too selfish to curtail their own social enjoyments to make strangers feel at home and to articulate new members into the body of Christ.

The *Western Christian Advocate* recently put the case happily, editorially:

"We have known parishes that really imagined they were very sociable, although the pastor ran across perpetual complainings on the part of strangers that 'the Church was cold.' As a matter of fact the Church was excessively sociable—among its own members. Little groups of particular friends would occupy adjacent pews, and, immediately after doxology and benediction, Jones would turn and shake hands with Smith and remark that the sermon was 'fine,' and Mrs. Robinson would ask Mrs. Brown if she were well and how the babies were getting along. One could count a dozen little eddies of talking and smiling people throughout the audience. Each one was a coterie of folks who had known each other from time immemorial. Apparently nothing could be more sociable. But, meanwhile, that poor unfortunate, 'the stranger within our gates,' who belonged to none of these 'sets,' after looking about expectantly for a few moments, would slip out

unrecognized and ungreeted. Is it wonderful that the pastor found it difficult to persuade him to come to the church again, or to unite with its membership?"

Often the most difficult problem of a pastor is not to get new members into the fold, but to get the "elder brothers" willing to share their fellowship, and especially any part of the leadership, with the younger sons who have returned to their "Father's house." Hence the need of a Church that will "hold." Second in importance only to the winning of men to Christ is the assimilating of them to the life of the Church. A wise pastor will talk frankly and affectionately to his people about it, emphasizing the necessity of a self-forgetting social ministry on the part of the congregation as the necessary complement of a self-forgetting preaching and pastoral ministry on the part of the pulpit, if people are to be permanently won to Christ.

Of course, other factors than sociability enter into the problem of "holding the people." All the skillful advertising in the world and the

acme of sociability will not wed people to a Church if they are not fed in any appreciable degree when they come. If, when they ask for bread, they receive only homiletical stones; if the preacher does not help them; if he habitually fulfills less than he promises in his advertisement of the service,—he will certainly fail to hold the strangers who may visit his church. A Michigan congregation laughs after twenty-five years at a pastor who would make the most extravagant promises of what his next Sunday sermon would be. He was one of those brethren "all whose geese are swans." Yet he could never learn why his calling geese "swans" did not make them such, or why the people would not come out as readily to see a goose as a swan. The preacher who habitually puts all his goods in the show-window will soon lose interest for the public. It is only by hard, honest work on each week's sermons that a pastor can secure an enduring constituency. This phase of the subject will be treated more at length in a subsequent chapter. At this point we desire to em

phasize the importance of sociability in holding the people.

We do not mean that perfunctory sociability which exhausts itself in a bow and smile and formal handshake. That is common enough, and often so manifestly artificial and insincere as to repel rather than attract. But real sociability will hold people. Real sociability is friendliness. A real interest in people—a respectful and at the same time gently persistent purpose to know them, to get into touch with their lives—that will win in nine cases out of ten. That will hold the people. For the fact is that people, great and small, crave sympathy. They are glad to meet people who take an interest in them. And they will go back to such a place. Even though they may be a little stiff themselves, and not inclined to meet the Church worker nearly half way, yet they like friendliness just the same, and none so quickly feel its absence as these very persons who are slowest to make or respond to advances.

We are to be interested in people, not at first

as souls, but as men and women. That is to say, it is not wise to begin to talk religion the first thing with strangers who come to your church. We are to interest ourselves in them first as flesh-and-blood people,—where they live, where they came from, what their line of business or work may be, the things which their hearts are full of. Then we may come to the things we want to interest them in. It is not less religious to do this. It is simply using Jesus's own method. He attended to men's outward needs first, and then to their souls.

A young man comes to the city and gets a position. Sunday he is lonely. He misses the familiar friends and associations. He drops in at a church. He is thinking of the eight-by-ten room at his boarding-house, of the grind of work on the morrow, and of the home and friends he has left behind him. He is homesick and unhappy. He sees only strange faces at church. A stiff usher escorts him to a stiff seat. A stiff choir stands up and renders a stiff anthem. A stiff preacher arises and reads a stiff

sermon. And the young man goes away without having had a word of friendly greeting or a hand-clasp of sympathy. The next Sunday he will probably be at a theater or a saloon. People are cordial and human there, at any rate. And so the ties are quickly formed which drag him down. For everything depends on who gets a man first when he moves to a new community. A man who had attended church six months without being greeted once, heard the minister preach on the "Recognition of Friends in Heaven." As he went out he told the usher that "he would like mighty well to have a little of it on earth!" But, on the other hand, it is remarkable what friendliness will do in a congregation. Oftener than anything else we have heard given as a reason for going to a certain church: "O, they are so sociable over there!" If the stranger is greeted at the close of the service with a smile and a hearty handshake, and a cordial invitation to come back, with perhaps an inquiry as to his location and Church affiliations, and an invitation to some social meeting of the Church, ten

chances to one he will come back, and often he will come back to stay. O, the power of a sanctified smile and a sympathetic hand-shake! No music can exercise such a hypnotic influence. No sermon can work such wizard wonders. The cordial Church will outgrow any other kind. The pastor himself can do much through personal greetings. The pastor who stands at the door at the close of the service and shakes hands with the people as they go out, with a word of greeting to each, as far as possible, has created something of a tie between himself and them. Much as it is emphasized to-day, we doubt if half of our preachers appreciate the power there is in sociability. Other things being anything like equal, it is the cordial, sociable minister who will draw and hold people to him with much greater power than the unsociable man. As it is a gift that can be acquired, the unsociable minister ought, for Christ's sake, to cultivate it with all care.

Dr. Louis Albert Banks, of New York, called our attention to a valuable point a few years ago; namely, that strangers usually come to a church

service early, before the members arrive. If a pastor comes early, and greets these strangers one by one, he accomplishes two things: he will have created a tie of personal acquaintance between the minister and his hearer; and he will have secured the names and addresses of people who are the most likely candidates for membership in his Church.

We have found this to be true in the years that we have followed this plan, and the results have been most gratifying. We take for granted that every preacher carries a vest-pocket memorandum, in which he enrolls the names of all such strangers. These persons, together with the names which he secures in other ways, constitute the outside constituency to whom announcements of special meetings and other literature relating to the work of the Church may be sent, and from these persons we find our roll of members is being constantly recruited.

Chapter IX.

THE SOCIAL MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.

Of the social ministry of individual Church members we have spoken in the preceding chapter. Of organized social ministries by the Church this chapter will treat.

The Church that does not give a reception or social to which non-members are invited, at least once a quarter, is missing one of its chief opportunities of Christian service. These socials should be without charge and with the social purpose supreme. It is a matter for congratulation that the number of Churches that hold pay socials is decreasing, and the number making the only object good fellowship and the promotion of acquaintance is increasing. We say this without presuming to pass upon the ethical question involved in pay socials, but having regard only to the influence of the gatherings on those who attend.

Such socials may be held either at the church or at private homes. Occasionally, at least, they may most profitably be held in the homes of the members. Strangers usually appreciate the courtesy of an invitation to a private residence. These socials may take the form of a reception to young men, either by the Epworth League or Sunday-school; or a reception by the men of the congregation to the congregation as a whole; or a reception by the whole Church to new members and friends of the Church; or by the Sunday-school to the parents of the children of the Sunday-school, and so on indefinitely. In large Churches it is often advisable to hold these receptions in sections; as, for example, a reception to students; another for young people away from home, along about Thanksgiving or Christmas; another for people from a given State, as for instance, in Louisville, a reception for "Hoosiers," of whom there are great numbers in the Kentucky metropolis.

These are mere hints of the ways in which a wide-awake social committee may vary its so-

ciables from time to time. The chief thing is to see that, as far as possible, all the people in touch with the Church receive an invitation to these gatherings. They form the Church's field. The pastor will usually have a list of a hundred such people, with their addresses. Sunday-school teachers will furnish the social committee with the names and addresses of the parents of their pupils who are non-members. The names of new members of the Church not yet articulated into its life and work may also be secured. And these people will all be made to feel that the Church really cares for them.

It is of primary importance, however, that the spirit of the Master shall animate the Church people at the social itself. It will require self-sacrifice on their part to forego the pleasure of getting off into little groups of congenial friends and talking about the many things they are mutually interested in, and to give themselves constantly to strangers who are hard to talk to, it may be, and uninteresting or unattractive. Yet it is just as real a work

for Christ and just as necessary as praying with them or getting them to unite with the Church.

Love was the magnet of the early Christian Church. "How these Christians love one another!" was the exclamation that arose to the lips of the heathen of those days, and it was the strongest argument for itself which Christianity could furnish. And the same brotherly spirit will win to-day. The Church of to-day will have to take heed lest the lodge take its crown. The social feature is so strongly emphasized in the lodge life of many a town, and so feebly exemplified in its Churches, as that the former are swarming hives of activity while the latter are half deserted.

The wise pastor will see that, at these receptions, there is a number of his choicest people pledged to give themselves to these non-members and new members through all the evening, else these will go away feeling that they have been neglected. So are we to become "all things to all men if by any means we may save some."

When making a little visit to Hugh Price

Hughes in London a few years ago, he told us of a Sunday-evening after-service of a social character which he was using frequently and to great advantage in his work at St. James Hall. This service was aimed particularly for the benefit of the hundreds of young men and women who work in the stores of West London. The following description from the pen of the Rev. Darlow Sargent, a colleague of Mr. Hughes, will make clear the character of the work:

"After preaching a few weeks at the St. James Hall and Princes' Hall to hundreds of young men and women, I became possessed of an intense longing to get into closer touch with this strong young life. I knew that they were beset by powerful temptations, and that many of them, fresh from the purity of a country home, were in imminent danger of being ruined. I asked God again and again for wisdom and definite guidance in this matter. One day, suddenly, the outline of the 'Social Hour' came to my mind. I found an early opportunity to lay the plan before the superintendent

of the Mission. He immediately saw that there was some good in the scheme, and gave ready permission for the experiment being tried. Events have proved that the work and the way of doing it were from God.

"The suggestion of the 'Social Hour' brought unspeakable relief to me. I saw how a supreme effort could be made by ministers, class-leaders, stewards, and others to get at the young people who were living in lodgings, or houses of business, whose practice it is on Sunday evenings to wander about the streets, where the most cunning and unsuspected temptations abound. About three weeks after we had begun the work, a gentleman said to me: 'Mr. Sargent, this "Social Hour" is of God. The most perilous two hours in the week for young people in London are those between nine and eleven on Sunday nights.' If any one doubts this assertion, let him stand in any of the great thoroughfares and witness the snares that are set on every side for their destruction.

"The arrangements for the 'Social Hour' are

simple. Cards bearing an invitation from the leaders of the Mission are given to the young men and women attending the services of St. James Hall and Princes' Hall. These cards are then presented at the door of Princes' Hall to the stewards, who stand there to give these young people a welcome. Tea and coffee are dispensed at one end of the hall. Ladies and gentlemen are always found ready to sing solos, the whole company joining heartily in the chorus. The leaders of the Mission are usually occupied in meeting cases of special difficulty, and in otherwise finishing the work of the inquiry-room. They also strive to make the acquaintance of all present. Those who are reserved, diffident, and in trouble, are invariably sought out by the sisters (deaconesses) and others. Fresh faces always find a hearty welcome. Class-leaders are busily engaged in obtaining new members.

"The proceedings close with 'Family Prayer,' a bright, inspiring hymn, a short passage of Scripture, and prayer. The young peo-

ple go forth greatly strengthened to meet life's difficulties by the feeling that the Church does care for them, and that there are friends on whose love and sympathy they can always rely. No better waters than these can be tried by those whom God has made fishers of men."

There is no question in the author's mind but that some such methods as this are a necessity in our large cities. Some plan must be devised by which the people who can save and the people who need saving shall be brought into intimate contact. Of what use is the salt unless it touches the meat? The superlative need of to-day is the intimate contact of Christian people with non-Christians under circumstances that will bring out the sympathy and sweetness of the Gospel. Such a service as this used by the West London Mission has very much of this element in it. There is the cordiality, the friendliness, the eye-to-eye conversation, the sweet-home hymns, the "Family Prayers," the recollections of home awakened, —all these are easily possible in such a service.

The only question is one of leadership and men and women dead-in-earnest enough to give themselves heartily to it.

Some Christian people will be found, doubtless, who would object to the refreshment phase of it. But in view of the importance of that part of it in getting hold of the kind of people that need reaching, and in view of the way in which drinking a cup of tea with people opens the way to fellowship with them, this objection is not valid. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day.

In this connection we may say that the Manchester Central Hall workers have their evening lunch together every Sunday evening between their afternoon and evening services. It saves a long trip home for many of them, and increases the spirit of fellowship. As the author sat down with these workers he could but think of the Christian Agape or Love-feast of the Apostolic Church.

Chapter X.

SPECIAL FEATURES FOR THE DOWN-TOWN CHURCH.

The perplexity of bishops, the despair of presiding elders, the heartache of pastors, the "white elephant" of Boards of Trustees,—all this, and more, is the average down-town city Church.

The city has moved up-town. The neighborhood has changed completely. The handsome residences are few. Boarding-houses with a faded-gentility look multiply. The houses that used to hold one family each, now do service for several. Roomers are legion. Students, artisans, clerks, day-laborers, and people whose business is such as that they are compelled to remain down-town,—these make up the changing neighborhood of the down-town Church.

Many of the pillars of the Church are gone,

either to heaven or to up-town Churches. Only a few of the "old guard" are left. Happy is that Church if it have a nucleus of strong, substantial, permanent residents remaining, around whom the kaleidoscopic mass of transients may revolve. For the essential characteristic of the down-town constituency is its mutability. The preacher preaches to a procession.

To meet these peculiar conditions requires peculiar alertness and special methods. These must be adapted to the new constituency. Many a Church of this sort has died because it did not fulfill that fundamental law of life—adaptation to environment.

To keep up an establishment keyed to the tastes of the wealthy and fastidious when the constituency is middle and lower-middle class, is to "bay the moon." Indeed, the attempt to do so, without the financial resources of a fashionable Church, results in a doubly heavy and dreary service, which the new constituency avoid as they would a pestilence. Pew-rents are

as fatal as arsenic. Quartet choirs are perilous. A heavy ritual requires prompt and heroic antidotes.

On the other hand, "slum" methods will not work. They would be resented instantly. Our methods must be adapted to self-respecting, fairly-intelligent people. And those methods have been found and put into practice by our English Wesleyan brethren in Manchester, London, and elsewhere. And they have received the seal of success in the Metropolitan Temple work of New York and in other cities in this country, with, of course, such variations in use as our own conditions suggest.

As we have already indicated, social methods must be strongly emphasized. Young people form the chief part of the constituency of the down-town Church. They board, and they move often. They are here this month, and gone the next, *unless* there is a strong tie to bind them to this locality. That the Church must furnish. It can do it, as we have seen illustrated in scores of cases. These young peo-

ple have only fragments of social life in their boarding places. Every one is strange. They are forced out of their boarding places by narrow walls and broad odors and the constant fear of stepping on somebody. Here is the Church's opportunity. It can get nearly every evening of these young people's time, to its own and their own vast profit. So intense is the competition for these lives by places of godless amusement that it is coming to this: either the Church must get practically all their time out of working hours, or it will get none. If the Church is silent and deserted four or five nights a week, these youth will drift into the grip of the maelstroms of evil which are ingulfing so many lives in the great cities.

Not only must the social life be strong to meet these peculiar difficulties of the down-town Church, but the down-town Church should be educational. Its work should embrace educational departments, unless local Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations are fully reaching its constituency. The Church

deals with very many whose early training has been abridged. Well-to-do families in the residence districts can give their children a good education. Not so with these bread-winners, young and old, who form the constituency of the down-town Church. Their only opportunity for self-improvement is at night. Of course, there are secular night-schools. But the same considerations that lead the Church to keep up denominational colleges apply to the education of our own young people in the cities. We want them under Christian influences. Moreover, it is certain that the Church will have to furnish, not only the opportunity, but the inspiration to study, for most of these young people.

Night-classes in various studies—such as book-keeping, typewriting, telegraphy, shorthand, etc., and Reading College work, where each student is bound to read a certain number of volumes of history, biography, travel, popular science, etc.—will indicate the direction of this work.

The down-town Church should be a center

of charitable activities. It will not supplant, but co-operate with, the local charity organization. It adds to the latter's rather mechanical service the sympathy and spiritual aid of personal ministration. "The gift without the giver is bare," as far as lifting the helped one to a higher plane is concerned. Here the work of the visiting deaconess is invaluable. In the city of Detroit their work in this direction was so marked that when the police of the city gave an entertainment a few years ago for charity, they put the proceeds of it in the hands of our Methodist deaconesses there for distribution, as the most efficient helpers of the poor in that city.

The successful and truly useful down-town Church will show a real interest in the industrial questions. This, not only because the Methodist Church has the largest number of working people in its membership of any Protestant Church, but because that which occupies so large a share of the life of the great majority of the people Christ came to save can never be a matter of

indifference to the organization that is to carry on his work. If Moses was impelled by Divine inspiration to enact so many laws to protect the poor, to prevent the absorption by the few of the patrimony of the many, and to provide for the harmonious adjustment of the relations of employers and employees, it is deserving of the serious and patient attention of the representatives of the Divine law to-day. If the prophets felt called to warn their nation again and again of these dangers, it certainly behooves the Christian Church, in the most materialistic age the world has seen, to apply the ethics of Christ to these living issues. Yet no work has to be done with more guarded care or more disinterested love.

There is no danger of the secularization of the Church by thus broadening the sphere of its work, provided it keeps a heart of fire by constant evangelism. If our Methodism will only dare large things for God, and not be afraid of the new methods which the ever-creative

Spirit of life is growing, and will always be growing, to meet the need of new conditions, we shall see the gloomy, half-deserted down-town Churches aflame with a new light and warmth, and throbbing with the joyous activities of a new and diviner life.

Chapter XI.

CONTINUOUS EVANGELISM.

Bears hibernate in the winter; Churches in the summer. In fact, as far as the work of soul-winning is concerned, most Churches hibernate during all the year except the month of "the revival." We Methodists satirize our Episcopalian friends for confining their religious zeal to the Lenten season; but do we not lay ourselves open to the same criticism by confining our soul-winning activities to the "revival?"

Many pastors look forward to the winter revival as their one star of hope. All the Church's distempers and weaknesses are to be healed them. Quarrels are to be settled, debts extinguished, and lethargy galvanized into abounding activity by the revival.

Other pastors look forward to it with dread.

To them it means anxiety, struggle, mental and spiritual depression, and uncertain benefits. And when their winter's "meetings" are over, they feel the same sense of relief that our ritualistic friends enjoy when Easter bells ring and they are relieved from the obligation of being "good." It has become a yoke, a legalistic bond, which they are reluctant to throw off for fear of censure.

How largely this latter feeling as to revivals is responsible for the employment of evangelists we do not attempt to say. But we will affirm that both these classes of brethren take a mistaken view of the revival. The former overrate its value, the latter underrate it. It has its place—and its important place, too—in the economy of the Church. It is in harmony with the constitution of the human mind, and of human society, and it bears the stamp of prophetic and apostolic sanction, as well as the equally Divine seal of successful use through centuries of human history.

But the disappointments and evils of revivals

arise from their spasmodic character. They are so often like those sudden storms which travelers in Northern Africa tell of: the flood comes sweeping down the dry bed of the river, filling it bank-full, but it soon spends itself, and the old barrenness returns. A revival should bear the same relation to the all-the-year-round work of the Church that the spring freshet bears to the perennial flow of the Ohio or Mississippi—an augmentation of its regular capacity and serviceableness. And such it is in those Churches which practice continuous evangelism.

Is it not true that our Churches have been miseducated at this point? Whether we have borrowed from our Calvinistic friends the idea that revivals are the sovereign gifts of God, and hence that we may expect the salvation of souls only when he is pleased graciously to pour out his Spirit; or whether we have come to rely wholly upon revivals for the conversion of souls because our fathers' ministry was specially blessed in this form of service; or whether the cause is something other than these,—the fact

remains that the majority of our Churches do not expect and do not have conversions at all seasons of the year, but only in the time of special meetings.

A young Baptist pastor asked Mr. Spurgeon why he (the young minister) was not able to secure conversions in his regular services.

"Why!" exclaimed the eminent Baptist, "you do not expect to have people converted every Sunday, do you?"

"O no, of course not!" replied the young man.

"That is the reason you do not have it," said Mr. Spurgeon. "I expect it, and so I get it."

Dr. T. L. Cuyler, who places so much emphasis on constant soul-winning, tells of Mr. Spurgeon once asking him to what extent the chief American preachers aimed at the conversion of souls in their regular services. The question was put in such a way as to indicate that he considered our eminent pulpiteers derelict in this important regard. No preacher of modern times had a more fruitful ministry

than Charles H. Spurgeon, and the very backbone of his success was his continuous evangelism.

We are very well aware that a considerable number of ministers—especially those making pretensions to culture, although often it is only an affectation of culture—habitually minimize a soul-winning ministry, affecting to believe, or perhaps sincerely believing, that its results are ephemeral and non-ethical; that it is emotional and undignified; and that only men of lesser caliber engage in it. We once heard a minister of this class speak contemptuously of the work of William Taylor. Yet that hero of the cross left his impress on four continents in missions, Conferences, and Churches organized as the result of his ministry, while the supercilious critic has been unable for fifteen years to hold a pulpit of influence in the Church, though in the prime of his powers, because he had so conspicuously failed in building up the Churches committed to his charge. The men who are preaching the Gospel of culture as the

cure of the world's deep hurt grow very merry over the extravagances and crudities of the revivalistic preachers, but an analysis of their congregations will usually show that, if it were not for these "crude" evangelistic preachers, their congregations would soon die away, in spite of the "enriched liturgies" of their services and "enlarged phylacteries" of their robes, for they are mainly recruited by letters from the Churches with evangelistic pastors.

Let no one suppose for a moment that the author decries real culture. He has no word of excuse for that intellectual laziness which makes pounding the Bible and crying "hallelujah" a substitute for honest brain-sweat in sermon preparation. Nor does he belong to those who think that God can use man's ignorance more effectively than his knowledge. On the contrary, he is profoundly convinced of the necessity of the most thorough preparation of the minister for his work, both in college and seminary, and, if possible, by post-graduate study and travel. We consider it of primary importance that the

minister should keep in sympathetic touch with the scientific advances of his times, keeping his mind open to all new truth from whatever source it comes, whether God's Book of Nature or God's Book of Prophecy. But we do insist that all culture—the broadest and rarest and highest—is but a preparation for the Christian to make him the more efficient winner of men to God. He does insist that culture and spirituality, not only may go together, but are meant to go together. They are married in heaven, and should never be divorced on earth. John Wesley was not only abreast of the scholarship of his generation, but in many regards was a century ahead of his generation. Yet he did not consider it undignified and crude to exhort men to repentance and to yield immediately to the claims of God. Hugh Price Hughes, who did more to renew the youth of Methodism in England than any man of the nineteenth century, was educated at Oxford. He tells us that when he left college, he, in common with his fellow-students, entirely dis-

counted evangelism, and was bent on making his reputation as a scholarly preacher. But when it pleased God to make one of his sermons at Dover, his first change, instrumental in the conversion of a score of persons, he had his eyes opened to the real significance of the ministry and the true dignity of preaching. We quote his own words:

"The result of that sermon changed my whole career. I was called upon to decide whether I would follow my literary ambitions or seek the salvation of souls. But I had tasted a new joy, and I chose the salvation of men. It was like turning the switch on a railway. It sent me on the evangelistic line, and I have been running on it ever since."

This new joy of Mr. Hughes reminds us of those words of Samuel Rutherford, that great preacher of the Scotch pulpit of the seventeenth century: "It is my heaven on earth to spend my days in gathering in some souls to Christ." And those words also of our American Nestor of the pulpit, Dr. Cuyler: "There

is no ecstasy this side of heaven comparable to that of winning souls to a new life and to the life everlasting."

All a preacher's sermons need not be hortatory in order to produce evangelistic results. In nearly every audience of any size there are people hungry for the grace of God. Souls are being ripened for decision all the time. God's providences and the Holy Spirit are doing the work. We ministers face men and women every week to whom God has been speaking far more powerfully than we can speak. They have been undergoing sorrows or reverses, or they have been through illness, or they have had letters announcing the death of dear ones, or they have had epistles from loved ones pleading with them to turn to Christ, or they have had sacred memories revived by passing events; all these, or some of these, have been ringing in their souls, like alarm-bells, the call of God, and they are on the verge of decision. Our sermon may not be directly evangelistic. We may have spoken without freedom. Our impulse is to close the

service at once. Yet many a time under just such conditions we have given the invitation to those who wished to accept Christ, and that invitation has been responded to by one or more souls. God had been preparing them for that hour. And we, by our lack of faith, had almost frustrated God's plan. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Only he shall both sow and reap who goes constantly forward, believing in the constancy of God's laws of spiritual harvest.

When the author entered the ministry, a consecrated and talented Christian woman, a lifelong friend and herself an evangelist of unusual power—Mrs. L. O. Robinson, of Indianapolis, Ind.—said: "My boy, always cast out the net. Expect God to give you results, and he will do it." It was a new idea to the young preacher; for he did not recall having ever seen an invitation given to seekers except in a series of revival-meetings. Yet he ventured to try it, tremblingly at first, lest the impotence of his

preaching should be made manifest to all—may it not be a feeling of this sort that keeps many a man from giving an invitation to seekers?—but what was his joy to find an immediate response in the turning of sinners to God. From that time until the present with occasional exceptions, he has made an appeal to the unsaved for immediate decision at the Sunday-night service. In at least three-fourths of the Sunday evenings there have been requests for prayer, and in nearly half of these cases there have been conversions.

Two results follow continuous evangelism: First, sinners are being constantly converted and brought into the Church; second, the Church itself is kept in a vital spiritual condition. It does not languish and become moribund. Where members are liable to be called on at any service to pray for penitents and to furnish light for darkened spirits, they are more apt to keep their own lamps trimmed and burning. The spiritual aim of the Church is thus kept uppermost, both before the eyes of the Church and of

the world; and non-Church members can not say, "No man cared for my soul."

We may add that outsiders are drawn to a Church where conversions are liable to take place at any service, for men like to go to a place where something is happening all the time.

Chapter XII.

A RECENT QUARTER OF CONTINUOUS EVANGELISM.

As an illustration of how continuous evangelism works we give the following notes of a quarter's work recently completed:

Sunday Night, November 2, 1902. — Preached on "The Gambling Devil," one of a series on "Six Modern Devils." Three seekers forward. Came out and knelt at the altar in the presence of a large audience. One of the seekers, a young insurance agent, handsome as Apollo, pierced to the heart over his gambling and some other dissipations. He did not "get through." Two young people united with the Church on probation.

November 9th.—Sermon on the "Liquor Devil." Made no call to the altar, but several raised the hand for prayer. Three joined the

Church on probation. Found a young married man under conviction. Had spent the afternoon in card-playing. Half a dozen of our people and his Christian wife remained behind with him, and we prayed with him and instructed him until his faith took hold, and he was happily converted. Both he and his wife united with the Church a little later.

November 16th.—Preached on "The Greed-for-Gold Devil." Held altar service. The young insurance man and his wife were among those at the altar. Happily converted, and both united with the Church on probation. Several others were blessed also.

November 23d.—Preached on "The Religion Men are Discarding." One young married man came to the altar and professed conversion. United with the Church, as did his wife also, a little later.

November 30th. Sermon on "Cutting to Pieces His Father's Bible." One young married woman came to the altar and was converted. Joined the Church on probation.

December 7th.—Preached on "The Greatest Stumbling Stone to Religion is the Sinfulness of the Heart." Several seekers came forward. Three accessions on probation. Two men and one woman.

December 14th.—Preached on "The Church Not Abreast of Scientific Advance of Society." (Repeated by request.) No seekers or accessions.

December 21st.—A visiting brother preached—an evangelist. One conversion in an after-service—a bright young lad.

December 28th.—Preached on "Things to Be Forgotten." No altar service, but found at close of service that an agnostic physician and medical college professor was present and under conviction. He had been attending the services for some weeks, and we had had two or three conversations with him, touching scientific difficulties to faith. Had loaned him Dr. W. L. Watkinson's "Bane and Antidote," and Horace Bushnell's "Character of Jesus" had been loaned to him by one of our Chris-

tian physicians. His parents before him had been infidels, and had died such. To-night he felt that his infidelity was gone, and he was ready to accept Christ. We repaired with him and a Christian physician to a side room, and there talked and prayed until the light came to the seeking man. On the following Sunday he united with the Church on probation. Being a graduate of two universities and talented, this physician's conversion has excited wide comment and exerted a most beneficial influence, especially in the medical college in which he is a professor.

January 4th.—Sermon on "The Program of the Church for 1903." No call for seekers, but in response to the question whether any desired the prayers of the Church, several hands were raised. Several of us staid behind to pray with one who raised his hand—a man of middle life whose wife had been compelled to leave him on account of his dissipation. He struggled with groanings and tears for deliverance, and at

length was happily blessed. Has remained true since then, and united with the Church.

January 11th.—Preached on "Are You Building Temples or Babels?" No altar service, but a lady remained to be prayed with, who had for several years been a skeptic; until within a few weeks had not been inside of a church for years. She accepted Christ, and found peace at this service; united with the Church on probation.

January 18th.—Preached on "The Passive Christ." No results visible.

January 25th.—Sermon on "The Temptations of Louisville Students." Seven young men and one young women came to the altar in the presence of an audience of a thousand. Several were blessed, and two united with the Church on probation.

Chapter XIII.

THE DIRECT APPEAL.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan is quoted as declaring that this generation of preachers has lost the art of exhortation. It is probable that this applies to the more pretentious pulpits only. In many lesser ones there is too much exhortation for the substance back of it, like a small kite with a large tail. Such a kite and such a sermon do not soar. What is more empty and dreary than reiterated exhortation, that has not had the way paved for it by honest exegesis and argument? It is like a man whom you have never met inviting himself home to dinner with you. "Perhaps the art of the orator is nowhere more visible than in the skill with which, in the conclusion, he presses his theme upon the affections and will of the hearer. If vehemence is too prolonged, it defeats itself. If this ex-

hortation goes beyond proper limits, it not only fatigues but disgusts the mind of the auditor. . . . It is safer to overdo the address to the understanding than the address to the feelings. The understanding is a cool and sensible faculty, and good sense never disgusts it. But the feelings are both shy and excitable. Addressed too boisterously, they make their retreat. Addressed too continually, they lose their tone and sensibility altogether." (Dr. W. G. T. Shedd, in his "Homiletics and Pastoral Theology.") Sound exegesis and argument must precede efficient exhortation. But given that, and a sermon without direct appeal, sinks to a lower plane than a good oration or court argument, for these aim at carrying the will as well as convincing the understanding.

Dr. James Stalker says: "We make impressions, but we do not follow them up to see that the decision is arrived at and the work of God accomplished; and so they are dissipated by the influences of the world, and those who have experienced them are perhaps made worse

instead of better. It is a very significant thing that is said of the pastor in our Lord's parable, that he sought the lost sheep 'until he found it.' We seek; we even seek laboriously and painfully; but we frequently leave off just before finding." ("The Preacher and His Models.")

As Dr. Stalker intimates in the passage quoted, there is such a thing as the recoil of the soul from feeling that does not ultimate in action. When the mind clearly apprehends duty, but does not follow it up by immediate action, it does violence to itself, reaction sets in, and it begins to lose the power either to feel or apprehend the truth. "And the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Right at this point, therefore, is a fundamentally important part of the preacher's work: he must make an appeal to the men before him for immediate decision. He must show them the danger of trifling with convictions. He must throw his will into the evenly-balancing scales and bring a decision. Men will evade a

decision as long as they can. It is human nature to do so. Men will remain passive under the strongest presentation of the truth, who, if pressed for an immediate decision then and there, will decide for God. Phillips Brooks's definition of real preaching is "the bringing of truth through personality." Here, more than at any other point in the sermon, is where the personality of the preacher becomes most powerful. If he will dare to throw the full weight of his personality into an appeal for immediate decision, he will overwhelm irresolution and the balance of opposing forces in the hearers' hearts, and secure action again and again. We contend that this is as much a part of the preacher's function as the clear and faithful presentation of the Word. Nor has a minister done his full duty by his congregation, nor will he stand acquitted before God, until he throws the full weight of his will into the effort to secure, yea, to compel, an immediate decision for Christ. And the full weight of his personality has not been brought to bear until he has brought his

will to bear upon the will of the hearer to secure instant submission to God.

The preachers of early Methodism were not always great theologians, although they would compare favorably with the best to-day in a real knowledge of Biblical theology; nor were they often correct and graceful speakers, but they were tremendous exhorters. It is a matter for profound regret that this note has dropped out of the preaching of to-day to so large an extent, especially out of the preaching of our more cultivated men. Is it from fear of offending? Is it considered bad form? Or is it believed that the intelligence of the hearers will lead them to make their own application and take appropriate action? From whatever cause, it is a serious mistake, and results in losing half the effects of our preaching. We are confident that half the people who have been brought to Christ during our ministry would not have yielded if they had not been pressed at the moment to immediate decision.

The direct appeal should not be reserved en-

tirely until the close of the sermon. While it should be the climax, yet two considerations demand subordinate applications and appeals earlier in the discourse:

(1) The fact that the interest of the congregation is better sustained by so doing.

(2) The fact that the time to drive home truth to the conscience, and appeal to the will, is when a point has been just completed and is fresh in the hearer's mind. It is not always the last hook on the trot-line that catches the fish.

While warning may appropriately constitute a part of an appeal, yet the dominant note should be a tender one. It is with an audience as with an individual,—any suggestion of a lack of sympathy will cut the nerve of influence. The same care has to be taken to avoid giving needless offense. The student of Paul knows what courtesy he invariably showed those whom he addressed, and what pains he took to conciliate their feelings and prejudices. He avoided any assumption of superiority; as, for example, when he wrote to the Romans: "I long

to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine." Nevertheless, when occasion required, Paul did not hesitate to use rebuke, and his exhortations had all the directness that the employment of the second person could give them.

Chapter XIV.

CASTING THE NET.

At the risk of "carrying coals to Newcastle" we give, in some detail, the methods used by us in casting the net at the close of the sermon. We do so because we have been asked as to these methods repeatedly in Preachers' Meetings.

Uniformity of methods is to be avoided. Variety is the soul of interest, and therefore of effectiveness. The tactful pastor will accordingly vary his methods as much as possible.

One method we use more frequently than any other to secure an expression from those who are interested in their soul's needs; that is, to ask the congregation to bow their heads in prayer at the close of the sermon, and then, before vocal prayer is offered, we ask those who desire the prayers of the Church to indicate it by an uplifted hand. We consider this method

preferable to rising because less public and less embarrassing, and because, by frequent experiment, we have found that it produces the best results.

The particular phrasing of the invitation will depend on the subject and treatment of the sermon. In the brief prayer that follows, the persons who have asked for prayer are very earnestly prayed for.

After that, the mode of procedure varies. Sometimes we hold an after-meeting, inviting all who care to do so to remain, especially those who have indicated a desire to become Christians. Then, with forty or fifty persons constituting the audience, either personal conversation or an altar service becomes easy. In thus dismissing the main congregation, it is best to have an understanding with some Christian workers to be on the lookout for those who raise their hands for prayer, and to invite them to remain for the after-meeting, else in the exit of the main body of the congregation, they will be swept away with them, through timidity or

other causes. Often we do not dismiss the audience, but ask those who must go to slip out during the singing of a hymn. Mr. Moody counts this method wisest. Sometimes we ask simply those who have requested prayer to remain behind after the dismissal of the audience, that the pastor may have a few words with them. In that case we have a half-dozen choice workers remain also, in order to help by their prayers and counsel in case the inquirers are willing to tarry as seekers. Some of our best results are secured in this way.

When the feeling in the congregation appears to be particularly strong, we use more heroic measures, and invite seekers to come forward in the presence of all, in the old-fashioned way. It requires a good deal of conviction for people to be willing to do this, yet it is frequently successful. As an object-lesson to the indifferent or thoughtless it is of no small value. Frequently, before making such an invitation to the unconverted, we call a half-dozen or more choice Christian workers forward

about the altar, calling them out by name before the congregation. This is done for two reasons: First, to have some persons of the right sort at the altar to pray with and instruct the inquirers; and, second, to encourage those who have asked for prayer to go forward in that open way. If the invitation is for all who will to come forward about the altar, the probability is that either so many Christian people will come as to hinder the work, and with them some undesirable workers, or that the Christians will be slow in responding, and thus dampen the convictions of the inquirers. By calling on a number of workers by name, prompt action is secured, and a desirable class of workers as well.

By way of varying the invitations we sometimes ask those who have been Christians for a certain length of time—a year, or five years, etc.—to come about the altar, and then the invitation to seekers. Sometimes we do not give an invitation to seekers to come to the altar, but ask those who purpose to lead a new life, and are willing to confess that purpose, to come for-

ward and give the pastor the hand. When they do so, we ask each one, as we shake hands with him, if he is willing to remain for a brief season of prayer, in which case he takes his place at the front pew until such prayers begin. Usually we have found them willing to remain, after having broken the ice by coming that far. If not, we do not use urgency, but keep faith with them, and allow them to return unembarrassed to their places in the audience.

A tactful pastor can enlarge upon these plans indefinitely, working almost numberless varieties of combinations for the securing of immediate results. One thing, however, we always guard,—the giving needless embarrassment by employing sharp turns or tricks. When a lad we saw a prominent minister ask all his congregation to stand at the close of his sermon. They did so. He then asked all Christians to sit down. This, of course, left all non-Christians standing—a painfully embarrassing position, as the flushed countenances of many bore witness. That minister no doubt meant

well; but he violated the law of courtesy, and took advantage of his audience, who were, in a sense, his guests. The only result was to alienate them from him and from his message.

The whole matter of "voting" has been so overdone by professional evangelists as to have fallen into disrepute in the better class of congregations. It is a question whether it can be profitably employed, except under peculiar conditions. Whether ever employed or not, one thing is certain: the pastor must consider the effect, not only upon that service, but on future services, as to whether the people he wishes to reach will return or not, and whether they will feel that unfair advantage has been taken of them. The law of Christian courtesy will solve the problem for any particular service. It seems to us that the Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman combines in a happy degree evangelical aggressiveness with a fine courtesy. The effect is seen in the influence he exerts on all classes of people.

"Do you send workers out into the congrega-

tion?" we have been asked. We reply in the negative. If the leader gives a general invitation to workers to go out into the congregation to do personal work, it is pretty certain that some will go who will do more harm than good. The most zealous are by no means always the most helpful. We frequently have an understanding with some of our most winsome workers, however, that they are to be scattered throughout the audience, to the rear, and when a hand is raised for prayer, near them, they are to see the person and invite him to accompany them to the altar or the inquiry-room, as the case may be.

For revival work the plan of Dr. C. W. Blodgett, of Cincinnati, is as complete and effective as any we know of. He divides his audience-room into sections, with a captain over each section. These sections are subdivided, with a worker in each subdivision. And over the whole is a captain-in-chief, who gives directions, hears reports at meetings of the workers, makes report of special cases to the

pastor, etc. This plan has the value not only of reaching all those who may ask for prayers, but of keeping a large number of Church workers actively employed, which is one of the most valuable things in Christian work.

Persistence is a prerequisite to success in a soul-winning service. Almost any service can be made fruitful by a wise and persistent leader. We give up too easily. We are discouraged if there is not an immediate response to our appeal, and are ready to "sing the doxology and pronounce the benediction." We do not understand the laws of the human mind. The fact is, that men frequently resist the first and even second invitation who are having hard work to keep in their seats. The thing for a pastor to do is to try another tack, and gently persist. We have again and again seen apparently hopeless services transformed into glorious victories by tactful persistence on the part of the leader.

If they will not arise for prayer or lift the hand, perhaps they will acknowledge their pur-

pose at some time to live a Christian life. And even that much of an expression will help them, and will lead to something more. If they are not willing to seek salvation, they may be willing to seek light as to what is their duty. If they are not willing to yield then to God, they may be willing to pray that they may be made willing. The resourceful pastor will find many ways of getting at the soul which is fortifying itself in its resistance to the truth.

The last thing a preacher should ever do is to get mad—to become impatient in tone or word or movement. How easy it is, under the strain of anxiety and in the face of the obduracy of souls, to get angry and scold! Let that be the very last thing he does, and let him be sure that that is after he has pronounced the benediction and put on his hat to go home. Then it will drive no one away from God, and harden no one's heart against his future messages. Now, as in Paul's day, we are to be "apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves."

Chapter XV.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH.

Dr. Thodore L. Cuyler once said of the three thousand souls brought into Church membership under his ministry, "I have handled every stone." The minister or other Christian worker who fails to touch men as individuals, fails, for the greater part, in reaching them at all. Occasionally there is a conversion during the delivery of the gospel message. But the vast majority require personal dealing with before they are able to apprehend the nature of repentance and faith, or, at least, are able to take those all-important steps. Either in the after-meeting, or at the altar, or privately, we must deal with aroused souls one by one before they are brought into the liberty of the sons of God.

In all Mr. Moody's work the hand-to-hand

work of the inquiry-room was deemed of the most crucial importance. There the supreme difficulties of the soul were grappled with. There Henry Drummond developed his remarkable powers of Christian instruction. Mr. Moody's inquiry-rooms were his drill-ground for his rare gifts as an expositor and illuminator of spiritual truths, as well as the scene of some of his greatest evangelical victories.

The power of the personal touch is being increasingly recognized by all who deal with inquirers, especially the more thoughtful class of inquirers. Nearly all preachers who attempt soul-winning work among students, for example, have certain hours of the day when students may call on them and open their hearts as to their spiritual needs. We found this method very helpful in a series of meetings recently held for the students of a Western college. Some of the best work of the meetings was done in the heart-to-heart talk with the students in the privacy of our consultation-room.

The ministry of Jesus magnified the per-

sonal touch. "Much of the Gospels is taken up with conversations between Christ and individuals. Teaching so startling and difficult as his, with such an element of attraction and hope, naturally drew around him many who sought to know further what this Gospel meant. He, on his part, was as eager to meet inquirers as they were to seek him; and we find that he bestowed as much care and pains in expounding the nature of his kingdom to individuals as he did when he was speaking to great multitudes. The audience, if small, was fit. Not only so, but we find that he put himself in the way of individuals." (Nicoll, in "The Incarnate Savior.")

Nor was it always a man of the rank of a Nicodemus or a Nathanael that he tarried with. He was as ready to pour out the wealth of his wisdom and personality on a Zaccheus and on an outcast Samaritan woman as on the leader of Jewish society. The Book of Mark might be appropriately called "The Gospel of the Personal Touch," for no less than nine times

does Mark speak of Jesus as dealing thus with individuals. Mark speaks again and again of Jesus "touching" some needy one, or "laying his hand upon him." It was as though Jesus felt a necessity of making his love palpable and visible, and as though he would set an example to his followers of closeness of contact and sympathy. It is a remarkable fact that the only infallible teacher and philosopher the world has ever had was greater as a philanthropist than as a philosopher. The practice of Jesus put love of men above love of the truth, even. Thus he illustrated the supreme importance of the personal touch.

A few years ago the author was on a train in Michigan when he noticed an old man in a faded blue uniform in the seat opposite, evidently a little under the influence of liquor. We felt that we ought to speak a word to him about his soul, but hesitated lest he might be too much in liquor to appreciate it. Just then a bright-faced girl, with an Epworth League badge on her breast, stepped down the aisle, and,

bending over, whispered a few words in the old man's ear. And the man in the faded uniform replied loud enough for all around him to hear, although in entirely respectful tones: "That 's so, Miss. I am not a soldier for Christ; but my old mother was, and she used to pray for me many a time."

That young girl's words may not have done the old soldier any permanent good. We never saw either him or the maid again. But they taught a lesson of fidelity to a Methodist preacher that he will never forget, and which he took occasion to acknowledge to the young Epworthian before she left the train. If all preachers and other professed followers of Christ were as intent on "the King's business" as that young girl, how rapidly the world would be brought to Christ!

Shortly after this incident we were being entertained in an Indiana city where an Epworth League Convention was in progress, at which we were one of the speakers. Our hostess was a Christian woman, but her husband

was not a member of the Church. We took occasion to speak with him on the way home from the night address at the Convention. He manifested a respectful interest, but no particular feeling. On reaching the residence, after a half-hour of pleasant social intercourse, we proposed prayer before retiring. And in prayer we remembered especially this gentleman. When we arose he was weeping, and in a few minutes more of prayer and words of personal encouragement and instruction was happily converted. What the service at the Church had failed to accomplish, the personal touch had done.

Still another incident of our personal experience will serve to emphasize the importance of the personal touch. While yet a student in college we were spending a Christmas vacation in an Indiana village. A cousin—a young lawyer—was spending the holidays in the same place. We were invited to preach at the Sunday-evening hour, and did so, but without any manifest results. On the way home

after the service we pressed the matter of immediate decision for Christ on this cousin. He showed interest, and then deep feeling. So we turned back to the then deserted church, secured the key, went in, and prayed the matter through. He was happily converted, and as a result a revival immediately broke out in the village, resulting in twenty-five conversions. Seven were converted as we held a private meeting in the residence of one of the young people, as a result of personal effort on their friends by those who had been converted. Out of the twenty-five conversions, three young men are now in the ministry doing most successful work, one of them being the lawyer cousin above referred to.

A Chicago wholesale merchant, who has investigated the matter, is quoted by Dr. Joseph F. Berry as saying that eighty-five per cent of the goods sold by wholesale dealers in the United States is sold through the work of traveling salesmen—the personal touch, if you please. Ninety-eight per cent of the immense

membership of the lodges of the country has been obtained in the same way.

Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull, in "Individual Work for Individuals," tells of a young Christian soldier who made a habit of visiting the Young Men's Christian Associations wherever his command was stationed, and arousing the young men of the Association to the importance of personal work. He says:

"Going into such a prayer-meeting early in the evening, at one time, he asked the leaders how many young men had been sought out from the highways and byways that evening. On being told that nothing of the sort had been done, he asked that all should kneel at once in prayer, offering an ejaculation of consecration to this service, and then that all should scatter to the street-corners and drinking-places and gambling-houses, and urging them to come in where they could be helped. Fifteen minutes or more later they were to return to the Association rooms, and then they might have a hopeful prayer-meeting there. The first experiment

was an eminent success, and its every repetition seemed an improvement on this. More of those for whom they had hoped and prayed were gathered in, in a single evening, under this plan of work, than under the old plan, or the no plan, in any one year before."

This plan is workable not only in Young Men's Christian Associations, but in Churches. And not only in large cities, but in towns. Hugh Price Hughes used the same method to reach the young men of the town of Oxford when he was pastor of the Wesleyan Chapel there. He "would meet the young men in the vestry at the close of the morning service. Fifty or sixty of them would assemble. It was then announced that Mr. Hughes was going to speak especially to young men that night, and every one of them was instructed to prowl about the streets of Oxford until he captured another young man who was not going to any place of worship. He was to march this young man into the chapel, sit between his prisoner and the end of the pew, and look over the same hymn-

book. He was gently to prevent the captured one from escaping at the end of the first service, and as soon as the second service began he was to invite him to go into the inquiry-room. Again and again these young men came in with radiant smiles, leading their bashful captives with them; and sometimes, as soon as the after-meeting began, as many as a dozen young fellows would be seen leading their comrades into the inquiry-room." (J. Gregory Mantle's "Life of Hugh Price Hughes," pp. 63, 64.)

Is not all this in exact harmony with the instructions of Jesus to "go out in the highways and hedges and compel them to come in?" It is our solemn conviction that the Church is losing immeasurably to-day by timidity and ultra conservatism. The fear of being criticised or laughed at, of doing unconventional things, acts like a paralysis on hundreds of Churches. At no one point have we diverged more widely from early Methodism and from primitive Christianity. When one really stops to think of it, nothing is more astonishing than the per-

functoriness and pointlessness of much of our religious service to-day. Christians, and even ministers, go for weeks and months without personally addressing an unsaved person about his soul, and whole Churches go on for months, and perhaps years, without setting on foot a single aggressive movement to reach unsaved people. There is a stated round of services of greater or less educational value, but without a single original departure to compel the attention of the careless, or to indicate that any one in the Church is giving any downright hard thinking and planning to reach the lost sons of God.

How different it was with the early Church! The description given by Bulwer-Lytton, in the "Last Days of Pompeii," of the zeal of Olinthus the Nazarene, as he addresses Apæcides on the public street, and in low but passionate tones, pours in upon the Greek the story of the Christ, and thus wins him to the Christian faith, is no fancy picture merely, but a true representation of the spirit and methods of early

Christians everywhere, whose tongues had been tipped with pentecostal fire. The victories of the early Church were largely the victories of the personal touch, as the Christians went everywhere preaching the Word.

It is a conviction with us, that has grown with the years, that the non-aggressiveness of so many Churches accounts for the dearth of men in those Churches. But wherever something tangible and aggressive is put into the hands of the men to do—such, for example, as the personal work campaigns of the Young Men's Christian Association soldier and that of Mr. Hughes—men will rally to the Church and its work as largely as will women anywhere.

The preacher is apt to feel that his work is to be done in the pulpit only, and hence to neglect the personal touch. He could scarcely make a greater mistake. The effect of many a passionate pulpit appeal is entirely dissipated on hearts that had been touched during the service by the failure of the preacher to manifest the slightest concern about the salvation of

the aroused persons when he meets them, perhaps immediately afterwards. This has been testified to by many. It gives the impression that the preacher's interest in them is purely professional, and therefore insincere. The writer has seen many persons brought to Christ in public services, but he can testify that, of about twenty-five hundred professed conversions under his ministry, the great majority of those who have stood the test in after years, have been those with whom he had first dealt personally. "Hand-picked fruit is the best."

Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull gives the most remarkable testimony to the value of the personal touch that we have ever seen: "For ten years (in the Sunday-school missionary field) I addressed gatherings of persons from ten or fifteen to five or six thousand each. In this work I went from Maine to California and from Minnesota to Florida. This gave me an opportunity to test the relative value of speeches to gathered assemblies. Later, for more than twenty-five years I have been the editor of a

religious periodical that has had a circulation of more than a hundred thousand a week during much of the time. Meanwhile I have published more than thirty different volumes. Yet, looking back upon my work in all these years, I can see more direct results of good through my individual work with individuals, than I can know of through all my spoken words to thousands upon thousands of persons in religious assemblies, or all my written words on the pages of periodicals and of books. And in this I do not think that my experience has been wholly unlike that of many others who have had large experience in both spheres of influence."

In harmony with this are these words from the late Dr. J. O. Peck, that princely Methodist pastor who saw about three hundred souls converted annually under his ministry: "If it were revealed to me from heaven that God had given me ten more years of life, and that, as a condition of my eternal salvation, I must win a thousand souls to Christ in that time, and if it were further conditioned that I might

preach every day for the ten years, but that I might not personally appeal to the unsaved outside the pulpit, or, that I might not enter the pulpit during those ten years, but might exclusively appeal to individuals, I would not hesitate one moment to choose personal effort as the sole means to be used in the conversion of the one thousand souls necessary to my own salvation."

Uncle John Vassar, the Baptist colporteur, loved to call himself "God's greyhound after souls." And as a result of this simple-hearted, fervent, loving disciple's quest for souls, literally thousands were brought into the kingdom.

After all, the secret of successful soul-winning is the value of the individual soul. Henry Drummond tells of an American medical student who was taking post-graduate medical work in the University of Edinburgh some years ago. He became exceedingly anxious for the conversion of a fellow-student, who was a skeptic. "I packed my trunks to go home," said the student, afterward, "and I thought of this

friend, and wondered whether a year of my life would be better spent to go and start in my profession in America, or to stay in Edinburgh, and try to win that one man for Christ, and I staid." A few months later, at Easter, Mr. Drummond saw the two young men together at the communion service, and the skeptic was handing the sacramental cup to his American friend who had won him to Christ. And that converted skeptic came to Drummond and told him with shining face how he had given himself to God for work as a medical missionary. Was it not worth a year of the medical student's life to win such a trophy? (Life of Henry Drummond, by George Adam Smith, pp. 365-6.)

Chapter XVI.

MUST THE PREACHER LOSE HIS SOUL-WINNING POWER WITH AGE?

Why should a minister lose his soul-winning power as he grows older? Nine out of ten do. Presiding elders tell us that it is the young men who have the revivals, and that the men in middle and later life, as a rule, are not successful soul-winners. The striking exceptions to this rule do not break its force.

We have watched the career of gifted men in the ministry, who, during the first ten years of their ministerial career, were exceedingly zealous and successful in their evangelistic labors. Hundreds were brought into the Church through their ministry. But of late years they have grown unproductive and rarely see a soul converted under their labors. One of these brethren was asked recently if, in his present

great Church, with its wealth and large membership and elaborate ritual, he was getting as much satisfaction out of his pastorate as when he was a young circuit-rider, with heart on fire with evangelistic zeal, and with hundreds of souls being converted under his ministry. The popular and, in all but soul-saving, successful pastor frankly replied, "No. I was happier then."

Doubtless every reader knows of many similar cases. An investigation of the sources of increase of such Churches will show that they are three,—the Sunday-school, revival services conducted by professional evangelists, and letters from less pretentious Churches in the country and towns round about. Cut off this last source of supply alone, and how quickly our city Churches would go down! While such Churches are able to make a good showing in the statistical tables, yet these statistics do not rightly gauge the vital force of the Church. That can be shown only by the number of persons brought to Christ by the labors of the pas-

tor himself and his people. And are we astray in saying that there are five thousand Churches in Methodism which do not see ten people a year brought to Christ through the effort of the congregation and pastor alone?

Of course, five thousand Churches in which not ten persons a year are converted except through the efforts of professional evangelists means that a great many Churches besides large city Churches are non-aggressive in soul-winning. And the vast majority of these will be found, on investigation, to be served by men in middle life or past middle life. Hence we repeat the question, Is it necessary that soul-winning power should wane in us as we grow older?

It is undeniable that the emotions cool with age. The mind becomes more meditative and speech more didactic. Orderliness, proportion, and the power of analysis are more fully developed, while the sympathies are less spontaneous, the feelings respond less readily either to outward or inward excitations, and the horta-

tory impulse is less easily provoked. All this tends to produce a teaching rather than an evangelistic ministry. The same law operating in other spheres of life has given rise to the proverb, "Old men for counsel, young men for war."

It is also true that in the larger Churches the responsibilities of the pastor have greatly increased in the past thirty years. The number of philanthropic and benevolent organizations to which he must give attention and direction, the variety of public addresses which he is called upon to make, the heavy demands which social relations make on his time and strength, and, perhaps greatest of all, the pressure of the great financial burdens of his Church, all taken together, make such an imperative and constant drain upon his thought and energies, that the winning of souls drops to a secondary place as far as his personal efforts are concerned. He becomes more and more the executive secretary of a great organization, and the especial work to which he was

originally called and ordained—that of winning men to God and building them up in the Divine life—he has to secure other men to do for him.

A very defective statement of the case would have been made, however, did we not take into consideration still another factor,—the loss of vitality in the preacher's own religious experience. Through the oft repetition of the sacred Name, and through the constant handling of sacred things, they have lost their power over him. He has forgotten that living a Christian is the finest of the fine arts, requiring unaffected attention and constant effort to keep in vital touch with the Source of life and power.

The persisting tendency of the Christian Church in all ages has been to revert to the old Jewish type, the religion of forms and ceremonies. It is the law of inertia, operative in the realm of spiritual things. Only the constant inflow of new life from the great Life-giver can lift us above it and maintain in us

the religion of the spirit—the reign of God in the moral nature and affections.

The preacher is not exempt from the operation of this law of inertia. To do things in the easiest way; to be satisfied with the forms rather than with the substance of things; to rely on an old experience instead of on a present vital union with Christ,—these are some of the temptations of the minister that cause his soul-winning power gradually to die within him. As Dr. Henry Burton, the eminent English expositor, says: "Preaching to others the gospel of rest and peace, he himself knows little of its experience and blessedness,—like the camel of the desert which carries to others its treasures of corn and sweet spices, and itself feeds on the bitter and prickly herbs." The manna of the Israelites had to be fresh each day. So with the minister also. It was President Charles G. Finney, who, in his Autobiography, declared that every preacher needed reconverting every two weeks. Of course. this was hyperbole. But by it he im-

pressed the truth that every minister needs frequent meltings down before God—those new and repeated anointings of the Holy Spirit which bring to him a renewed vision of Christ and an abiding sense of the immanence of God in his life and ministry. For "where there is no vision, the people perish."

We profoundly believe that the battle for souls is lost or won in the preacher's own heart, as far as his congregation is concerned. If he goes into his preaching service baffled and defeated in his own experience, he has little heart to call men to repentance and holiness. The note of compelling power is absent. He speaks as the scribes, and not as one having authority.

From this spiritual weakness and poverty often grows his absorption in other things. He is busy about a thousand trifles; he is "serving tables" instead of being absorbed in the ministry of the Word, to which he was called; he is perspiring under a hundred self-imposed burdens, but not one of them is the burden for souls which made the prophet weep for his peo-

ple, and sent our Lord to the bloody sweat of Gethsemane. "The life that is always busy, in a constant swirl of petty duties, flying here and there like the stormy petrel over the unresting waves, will soon weary, or wear itself out, or it will grow into an automaton, a life without a soul." Of all men, preachers most need to heed the message of that familiar hymn:

"Take time to be holy;
The world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret
With Jesus alone.

Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in him always,
And feed on his word.

Take time to be holy,
Be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive
Beneath his control."

It would be a pathetic thing, indeed, if any minister who had succeeded in drawing the people by judicious advertising, and attractive pulpit themes, and a genial sociability, and a warm-hearted sympathy, should find, when

the multitudes came, that he had no saving message for them. The friends had come to him in their journey, and he had nothing to set before them. It would be as if the light-house keeper, amid the gathering gloom and storm and the peril of driving ships, should laboriously climb the long flights of stairs leading to the signal tower, bearing the burnished lamp in his arms, only to find, when he reached the top, that his lamp had gone out. He had thought of everything but the oil! And the ships dash by in the falling night to the breakers and death. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

We have seen this happen more than once—this tragedy of the Christian ministry. We have seen a young minister start out with high ideals of service and a passionate enthusiasm for souls, and with the anointing oil of his consecration fresh upon him; and people bowed under his appeals like standing grain before the wind. Popularity came, and hands beckoned him up—higher and still higher. Con-

scious of a message, and believing that the world in darkness needed the blaze of his torch, he has gazed still further up the heights, and said to himself: "O, how much further my light would shine if I but occupied yon point of vantage!" So he has set himself to win it. He has planned and worked, and set his friends to work for him, toiling upward through the years, until the coveted place of honor was his—when, lo! he discovers that his light has gone out! He has reached the ear of his generation, but he has no message. His compromises and spiritual defeats have made him dumb. He is but a cumberer of that high and holy ground.

Many a man has given up his selfish life-ambition to enter the ministry, and rejoiced in the thought that it was dead, only to have a presence meet him in the midst of that ministry which wrung from him the cry of Ahab at the threshold of Naboth's vineyard, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy!"

We advocate neither quietism nor mysticism. There is such a thing as sanctified am-

bition—the ambition to be our best and do our best for God and the world. We are to express, not suppress, our potential selves. And preaching is personalized truth. But that personality must be constantly irradiated by the unselfishness and purity of Jesus. Our overhanging and often overwhelming peril as preachers is in losing that sensitiveness of soul, that fine honor, that singleness of purpose, which alone can make our messages real, and penetrating, and of compelling power to men.

Chapter XVII.

THE RE-ENFORCEMENT OF PERSONALITY THROUGH COMPANIONSHIP OF BOOKS AND MEN.

Personality is the chief factor in the problem of success. It was the personality of Philip Henry Sheridan that turned defeat into victory at Cedar Creek. It was the personality of Napoleon that enabled him to get ten times as much out of a soldier as an ordinary commander could. It was the personality of John Paul Jones that gave him alike the passionate devotion of his men in the forecastle and a welcome entrée into the circle of nobility at the French court. So it is personality that gives the greatest success in the work of the ministry.

It goes without saying that ordinary men do not possess extraordinary personality. But there is such a thing as the re-enforcement of

personality. And that is the hope of the extension of the kingdom of God. It was Mr. Lincoln who said that God must like common folks, or he would not have made so many of them. If the progress of the kingdom must wait on the coming of great men, our cause is doomed. But it does not so wait. Its progress depends, as William Arthur has pointed out so vividly in "The Tongue of Fire," on endowing ordinary men with extraordinary power. All Christians believe this, unless they have been made pessimistic and Atheistic by disappointment or disobedience. And there is a vast deal of practical Atheism among professed followers of Christ. But all believers in this reenforcement of personality do not appreciate that much of it comes through purely human sources.

God is a great economist. He does not do for men what they can do for themselves. He appeared in a vision to Saul of Tarsus, but he sent him to a Damascus disciple to learn the full text of his message. He appeared to Cor-

nelius in a supernatural manner, yet he sent him to Peter to get the real significance of his gracious visitation. So are the Divine and human elements blended in all revelations and in all preparation for Divine service.

The preacher's personality is re-enforced in three ways:

First. By the companionship of books. No mind can stagnate that keeps in constant contact with the freshest and best books. It may not be possible for us to be mentally profound or brilliant. Indeed, it is certain that we "average preachers" will be neither. But we may be mentally *alert,* and we are inexcusable if we are not. It was an angel that came down and stirred the pool of Bethesda to healing virtue, according to an interpolation in John's Gospel. Be that as it may, the stagnant pool of many a ministerial mind has been stirred to healing virtue by the angel touch of a new and virile book.

The author has been in some preachers' libraries which were not, indeed, the "abomi-

nation of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the prophet, but whose dreariness might well tempt the title. Not a single fresh, vitalizing book was on its shelves. And yet those preachers could not understand the toboggan trend of their appointments! The growing preacher well understands that the pollen from the bloom of other minds is necessary to the fructifying of his own.

Artists tell us that their constant work among mixed colors begets color blindness. So they find it necessary to lay aside their work for awhile, and "wash out their eyes with pure colors." They take the seven original colors and gaze on them until the distinctions in color become clear again. It is even so with the preacher. He, too, must lay aside his paint-mixing and the laying-on process for awhile each week, that he may wash out his vision with perfect colors, by the study of the Word, and of the interpretation of the Word by men who have been divinely aided in applying it to the conditions of human life. Whether Ten-

nyson and Browning, or George Matheson and J. H. Jowett and W. L. Watkinson and George Adam Smith and Henry Drummond, they are the illuminators of God's Book to him. And he arises from their association rejoicing like a strong man to run a race.

If he can read but little secular matter he should read what the young people are reading. He must not allow them to get ahead of him, else his influence vanishes.

Second. A preacher's personality is re-enforced by the cultivation of broad and generous sympathies. A narrow-hearted preacher is a foreordained failure. "My boy," said Bishop Joyce to the writer when he was entering the ministry, "more preachers fail through lack of heart than lack of head." We have watched for facts to support that statement since then, and have been deluged with them.

That which is commonly called magnetism is chiefly sympathy. A man of sympathetic nature, although not profoundly spiritual, will reach people more effectively than a profoundly

spiritual man who does not appear to be sympathetic.

Two classes of people are reached by the sympathetic preacher,—the people who like some attention, and the people who have burdens and heartaches. And as all other people are in the cemetery, we see our calling, brethren. The greatest element in the personal popularity of Jesus was his sympathy. "The common people heard Jesus gladly," because he felt for them. He, too, had suffered from poverty and social ostracism, and from unsatisfied longings for elevating and refining associations. And the preacher, who, like Jesus, has come up from such conditions, has the advantage over his brothers who have been reared in homes of comfort, unless, indeed, he has brought up with him the antipathies of poverty, as well as its sympathies. For the most subtle and powerful sympathies are memories. Strong feeling, however, does not always mean breadth of sympathy. Some men's antipathies are in exact ratio to their sym-

pathies. And it is better for a preacher that a millstone were hanged about his neck than that he should wear his antipathies on his coat-sleeve. If so, he is a Pandora's box in trousers. He certainly belongs to the Peripatetic School of the itinerancy, and the sound of nailing boxes is ever heard in his land.

Hence the necessity of cultivating breadth of sympathy. No, not for this reason; but because he is called to minister to the uncongenial and the repulsive as well as to the congenial; because he is to let fall his loving ministries, like the rain, upon the just and the unjust, on the lovable and the unlovable,—because of this he is to cultivate a sympathy as broad as human needs. He is to be interested in young and old; in learned and unlearned; in the man of the street and the woman in the reception-hall; in the student and in the factory operative. He must have as hearty a sympathy for the converts who were brought in under his predecessor as for those who are won by his own ministry, else he is only a stepmother preacher. God pity

the preacher whose heart is not big enough to take in all his flock; for where his heartstrings stop his ministry stops!

Hugh Price Hughes was a rare illustration of wide sympathies. Not that he did not have some antipathies, too; but his heart took in all sorts and conditions of men. Probably no man since Lord Shaftesbury was in touch with so many men of widely-different grades in English society. Hence it was that he saw converted, in his St. James Hall services, cabmen and costermongers, merchants and members of Parliament; and hence it was, also, that, at the time of his death, Mr. Hughes was the best-known man to the men on the street of any minister in all England.

Henry Drummond was another illustrious example of breadth of sympathy. He was at home among the workingmen of Possilpark, to whom he preached the addresses which afterward composed "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and he was equally in touch with Lord and Lady Aberdeen and Premier Gladstone.

He loved Marcus Dods and George Adam Smith, higher critics and progressive scientific thinkers; yet he was passionately devoted to D. L. Moody, conservative Biblical student, and he called him "the biggest human he had ever met." His heart went out to the street boys of Glasgow and Edinburgh, yet yearned also over the lives spent in luxurious idleness in the mansions of West London. And because he was in sympathy with all, he was equally welcomed by all, and was a blessing to all.

We know a preacher in Michigan sixty years of age, not a college graduate, and not possessing all the qualities supposed to be necessary to the highest success in the ministry; yet he has been in demand steadily for thirty years by the best charges in the Conference, and repeatedly by Churches that he has already served. The secret of it is not his eloquence, although he is sometimes eloquent, but his remarkable breadth of sympathy. It is as wide as the cities in which he labored.

While such breadth of sympathy is in part

a gift of nature, yet it can be cultivated, and, next to the grace of God, is the greatest factor in a minister's success. Its importance will appear when we remember that God held back his campaign for the conquest of the whole world, although he had a most heroic band of apostles, until he had secured a man of cosmopolitan, yea, of world-wide, sympathies to lead that campaign, in Paul, the citizen of many lands.

Chapter XVIII.

RE-ENFORCEMENT OF PERSONALITY THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

A preacher's personality may be re-enforced most of all by the power of the Holy Spirit. For soul-winning this is indispensable. It is that quiet and, to men, undiscernible but pervasive influence which gives effectiveness to the preacher's message, and which brings his very looks and acts into harmony with his words, and makes them all persuasive to a degree utterly impossible without that unction. The same sermon may be preached by the same man under as favorable conditions as regards all else, yet if he is without the aid of the Spirit—as many a preacher has found himself, because of disobedience—it will be entirely powerless. The writer has tested this more than once, and has seen it tested in the work of brother ministers.

So much has been spoken and written about being filled with the Holy Spirit, and it is so constantly in even the most perfunctory prayers of Christian people, that the phrase has become distasteful to some, and has lost its significance to many more. Unquestionably the words, as commonly used, have been emptied of their original content, and come dangerously near being cant. Nevertheless, given their Scriptural meaning, they still stand for the most precious and most mighty depositum of the Church of Christ. Brushing away the feeble copies of copies, and going back to the apostolic original, we find in the Book of Acts the filling of the Spirit as the all-sufficient preparation of the infant Church—infant in size as well as in age—for its conquest of the world. William Arthur's portrayal of the effect of the Spirit's re-enforcement of the disciples' ministry is none too strong:

"On the day of Pentecost Christianity faced the world with a new religion, and a poor one, without a history, without a priesthood, with-

out a college, without a people, and without a patron. She had only her two sacraments and her tongue of fire. The latter was her sole instrument of aggression. All that was ancient and venerable rose up before her in solid opposition. No passions of the mob, no theories of the learned, no interests of the politic favored her, nor did she flatter or conciliate one of them. With her tongue of fire she assailed every existing system and every evil habit; and by that tongue of fire she burned her way through innumerable forms of opposition. In asking what was her power, we can find no other answer than this one: 'The tongue of fire.'" ("The Tongue of Fire," p. 98.)

We have heard Bishop Thoburn speak a good many times, and do not recall having ever heard him when there was not an impression forced upon us that a Mightier One was speaking through him. As all know, he is a very quiet and unimpassioned speaker, and quite free from what we call the arts of the orator. Yet the effect which this quiet man's words

have are out of all proportion to what one would antecedently expect, and have no other explanation than that he has the re-enforcement of the Divine Spirit.

An entirely different type of man was the late Hugh Price Hughes—a man who, as far as his natural powers were concerned, was at his best in the leonine encounters of debate. Yet in his preaching there was the same re-enforcement of the Divine Spirit that we have spoken of in the case of Bishop Thoburn. We heard him repeatedly on Sunday nights in St. James Hall, in the heat of midsummer, and his sermons at the start were rather heavy, but ere long the glow of a heart in a passionate quest for souls suffused the entire discourse, and his closing appeals were irresistible, and long lines of young men and women came pouring over the platform into the inquiry-rooms which lay just behind.

Mr. Hughes's friend, J. Gregory Mantle, who has published the only biography of him that has yet appeared, tells of an experience

that came to Mr. Hughes in his second pastorate, at Brighton, during a Convention for the Promotion of Holiness, in 1875. He says: "Ministers from all parts of Great Britain and Europe were present, and not a few have been able, like Mr. Hughes, to mark the beginning of a life of absolute surrender to Jesus Christ from that Convention. . . . Up to that time there were certain objects of human ambition which had come between him and the enjoyment of the fullest spiritual life; but during those memorable days, under the teaching of Mrs. Pearsall Smith and Pastor Theodore Monod, he made a full surrender, and saw that it was not only his duty, but his privilege, to yield all to God, and to take all from God. And with remarkable power and success Mr. Hughes has been enabled since that time to lead thousands of his fellow-believers into 'the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.'"

Charles G. Finney was the most remarkable preacher of his generation, as judged by the fruits of his ministry. It is not too much to

say that both Presbyterianism and Congregationalism owed more to his ministry than to any man in the nineteenth century in America. President Finney's ministry was constantly accompanied by this power of the Spirit. And not only his ministry, but his personal intercourse with people, was alike marked by it. In the relation of his experience in private, or in the most casual remarks, persons were brought under profound conviction. The incident is familiar concerning his visit to a factory where many girls were employed, and his fastening his eyes on a girl who made a flippant and rude remark. The look contained both reproach and compassion, and the girl began to tremble, the thread of the loom snapped in her fingers and she began to weep, and in a few moments the room was converted into an altar, full of weeping, praying penitents. The secret of such power is suggested by a little sidelight from Mr. Finney's home, related to the writer by an old student of Oberlin who lived in President Finney's home. He said that it happened more

than once during his stay in that home that Mr. Finney would be seized with uncontrollable weeping during a meal, and would excuse himself from the table that he might go to his room and pour out his soul in behalf of his students. The way in which the Holy Spirit fell upon Mr. Finney immediately after his conversion, when he says that in his law office he felt "the Holy Spirit descend upon him in a manner that seemed to go through him, body and soul," is one of the most thrilling passages in all religious biography. He says: "No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. . . . It seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love. It seemed like the very breath of God. I wept aloud with joy and love." (Autobiography of Finney, p. 20.)

Usually the power of God's Spirit does not manifest itself in such a sensible and apparent manner as this experience of Mr. Finney. Rather is it to be apprehended and relied on by faith, and no doubt Mr. Finney himself was often afterwards without any sensible token

of the Spirit's presence. But the Spirit wrought just the same.

It is no uncommon thing for a preacher, after the most earnest prayer, to have to go into the pulpit without any sense of the Spirit's presence, but, on the contrary, feeling a peculiar sense of heaviness; but claiming the presence of the Comforter, he finds ere long that He is working mightily both in him and through him to the blessing of many. This we have discovered in our own experience, again and again. At the same time we confess ourself to be only a neophyte in the school of the Spirit.

Dwight L. Moody's "Life," written by his son, William R. Moody, tells the story of the way in which that modern apostle was anointed for his life work. It was some sixteen years after his conversion, when he was in New York soliciting funds to rebuild his Chicago church, which had been burned in the great "Chicago fire." Mr. Moody relates his experience thus:

"My heart was not in the work of begging.

I could not appeal. I was crying all the time that God would fill me with his Spirit. Well, one day—O what a day!—I can not describe it, I seldom refer to it; it is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had an experience of which he never spoke for fifteen years. I can only say that God revealed himself to me, and I had such an experience of his love that I had to ask him to stay his hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not different. I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world; it would be as the small dust of the balance." ("Life," p. 149.)

J. Wilbur Chapman is recognized as one of the sanest of evangelists and one of the most successful soul-winners of this generation. Mr. Chapman speaks of an experience coming to him after having dedicated himself wholly to God: "Then, without any emotion I said, 'My Father,

I now claim from thee the infilling of the Holy Ghost.' From that moment to this he has been a living reality."

F. B. Meyer, of Christ Church, London, declares that his enduement of power came to him thus: "I felt no hand laid upon my head, there was no lambent flame, there was no rushing sound from heaven; but by faith, without emotion, without excitement, I took, and took for the first time, and I have kept on taking ever since."

To the testimony of these eminent representatives of various Christian communions we add the testimony of a Methodist pastor in America, distinguished alike for his beautiful character and his phenomenal success in the winning and culture of souls. Dr. J. O. Peck—whose recent death was so great a loss, not only to the Missionary Society, but to the entire Church—tells the story of his Pentecost as follows:

"While pastor in Springfield in 1872 a memorable incident in my experience occurred. I had never, consciously, lost my zeal or de-

votion to the gospel ministry nor the evidence of my assured salvation in Jesus Christ. God never left me a single year without a gracious revival, in which many souls were given as the seal of my ministry. Never had my pastorate been more favored with the Divine blessing than at Springfield; but in the summer of 1872 a deep heart-hunger that I had never known began to be realized. I hardly knew how to understand it. I had not lost spirituality as far as I could judge of my condition. I longed for—I scarcely knew what. I examined myself and prayed more earnestly, but the hunger of my soul grew more imperious; I was not plunged in darkness or conscious of condemnation, yet the inward cravings increased. The result of these weeks of heart-throes was a gradual sinking of self, a consuming of all selfish ambitions and purposes, and a consciousness of utter emptiness. Then arose an unutterable longing to be filled. I waited upon the Lord and he delayed his coming. No matter how or by whom, but I had been prejudiced against

the National Camp-meeting Association. I avoided their meetings; but in the midst of my longings of soul their meeting at Round Lake in 1872 occurred. I had not thought of attending, but while the meeting was in progress a conviction was poured in upon me, as clear and unmistakable as my identity, that if I would go to that meeting and confess how I was hungering after more of salvation I would be filled. To my surprise, and a proof that my sincerity was genuine, I found no prejudice rising up, but a longing to go. I conferred not with flesh and blood, got excused from officiating at an important wedding, and started the next day.

"I arrived near evening, and as I had but that night and the next day before returning to my pulpit, I resolved to waste no time. At once I told the leaders of the meeting, my purpose and errand. I seemed to be near to Peniel, and my soul was impatient. After a sermon (by whom I forget, for men were eclipsed in my yearning to see 'Jesus only'), I asked the privilege of saying a few words. Many old

friends were present, but I felt no hesitation, so fully was I possessed by a desire to know 'the length, breadth, depth, and height' of the love of God. I frankly told my errand there, and sought the prayers of all. I told them I wanted 'the fullness' that night, and felt it was the Divine will to give it that hour. I then descended to the altar and knelt with others before the Lord. I knew what I came for, believed it the will of God to bestow it, and cast myself fully upon the promises of God. By simple trust I was enabled to take Christ as my sufficiency to fill and satisfy my hungry soul. The instant I thus received Christ as my 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' the stillness and emotionlessness of absolute quiet permeated my entire being. I came near being deceived, for I had anticipated being filled with boundless ecstasy and joy. My enthusiastic and highly emotional temperament foretokened this, and I had already discounted such rapture. The tempter was by my side instantly and suggested seductively, 'All feeling

has left you, the Spirit is withdrawn, and you are doomed to disappointment.' But quick as thought came my reply, 'With or without seeing, I here and now take Christ as my all and in all!' I knew that moment he was my complete Savior! At once the most delicious experience was mine that I could conceive! No joy, no rapture, but something sweeter, deeper than anything before known—'the peace of God that passeth all understanding!' It settled upon me deeper and deeper, sweeter and sweeter, till I seemed 'filled with all the fullness of God.' I was ineffably satisfied. I could not shout or speak. Words would have been mockery of that peace I felt,

'That silent awe that dares not move.'

"I continued in speechless wonder until the meeting closed, and was wrapped in adoration. The Spirit sealed these words on my heart, which have been ever since the sweetest verse in the Bible to me: 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.' My soul knew

that peace, and was subdued and filled with it. I continued through the night in that silent bliss; but the next morning at the stand I confessed the gracious work that Christ had wrought. As I testified my soul caught fire, and my words burned with love, and yet peace was the supreme consciousness. I returned home that day, and at the first opportunity declared to my own flock the fullness of Christ that had been bestowed.

"And this experience I have never lost—not always clear and conspicuous, but ever a sacred deposition in my heart. Certain results have followed this experience, or attended it in my ministry:

"1. My soul has been one with God. I have not had an ambition or plan or purpose that was not formed in the desire to glorify God. Not perfect, nor faultless, nor mistakenless, nor errorless, yet the whole purpose of my life has been to please him.

"2. I have had a greater love for my work. I always loved it intensely, but it has seemed

to possess me, the salvation of dying men has been a passion. I love the work with glowing affection.

"3. Greater results have followed my ministry. More souls have been converted each year—two or three times more. I have had power unknown before to persuade sinners to come to Christ.

"4. My intellectual work was at once vastly stimulated. I have studied twice as much each year. My thought has been clearer and my love for patient thinking more ardent.

"5. Perfect love has reigned in my soul. I have not slept a night since that camp-meeting with a bitter or vindictive or unchristian feeling against a human being. It is easy to love men. I have experienced my share of occasions for the exhibition of unsanctified human nature, but it does not spring up. I judge it is not there.

"6. I have had an aversion to argument or controversy on the subject of Christian perfection. I dare not speculate. I dare not mix

my little human philosophy with the great Divine truth and the Divine experience. This instinctive shrinking from polemic or speculative methods of treating this subject has, perhaps, made me misunderstood by reason of my silence. Any movement which has seemed to isolate or differentiate holiness from the traditional teachings of Christianity has not commanded my convictions. I do not condemn others, but obey my own convictions.

" 'My soul doth magnify the Lord' for this experience which has doubled my joys, and, if I may judge, doubled the effectiveness of my imperfect ministry."

Chapter XIX.

DAVIDIC METHODISM VERSUS SOLOMONIC METHODISM.

It has been happily said that "Methodism began in a conscience, an organization, and a rapture." It was well that it was first of all a conscience, else its rapture might have been unethical, irrational, and pitiable, and its organization only a second order of Jesuits. But it began in a mighty conscience. Its conscience was a revolt against an immoral and selfish age. It was a protest, and more than a protest, against *dilettante* religion, against baptized worldliness, against a Reformation that needed reforming, against a sacramentarian and moribund Church.

Its conscience was the Puritan conscience, but with the Puritan skeleton clothed upon with the warm flesh and the radiant life of a healthy

Christian manhood. It was the Puritan conscience shot through with the beauty and glory of an abounding spiritual life. Puritanism represented Sinai; Methodism represented that, but it represented Pentecost also. Puritanism was negative; Methodism was positive. Puritanism represented what men must give up who obey God; Methodism represented that, but it represented also what men receive who follow Christ. Puritanism was iconclastic, destroying shams and corruptions; Methodism was constructive, destroying evils by the expulsive power of new and holy affections. Methodism was, like Puritanism, a gigantic conscience, but it was also a rapture! And its power over men lay in its being bank-full of a loving, comforting, joyous life.

Puritanism had its hymns, but they were set in minor key; as, for example, that noble penitential hymn of Isaac Watts:

> "Almighty God, thy piercing eye
> Strikes through the shades of night,
> And our most secret actions lie
> All open in thy sight!

There 's not a sin that we commit,
  Nor secret word we say,
But in thy dreadful book 't is writ
  Against the judgment day.

And must the crimes that I have done
  Be read and published there,
Be all exposed before the sun,
  While men and angels hear?
Lord, at thy feet ashamed I lie,
  Upward I dare not look;
Pardon my sins before I die,
  And blot them from thy book."

Methodism had its songs in minor key also, but they never left the penitent pleading for pardon "before he died." That pardon was expected in the immediate present. Its characteristic strain was one of triumph; as,

"'T is a Heaven below my Redeemer to know,
  And the angels can do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet and the story repeat,
  And the Lover of sinners adore."

But let us analyze a little more specifically:

1. The mechanical characteristics of early Methodism were:

(1) A minute organization into classes, and later into the various kinds of Conferences.

(2) A monarchical government during Wesley's life—a benevolent dictatorship—and after his death an oligarchy, constituted of ministers.

2. The doctrinal characteristics of early Methodism were:

(1) A free salvation, or an unlimited atonement.

(2) A felt salvation, or the witness of the Spirit to justification.

(3) A full salvation, or love made perfect through faith in Christ.

3. The vital characteristics—those expressing early Methodism's inner life—were:

(1) Simplicity of personal life and public worship.

(2) The exercise of a strict discipline over ministers and members.

(3) Self-sacrificing devotion to its ideals.

(4) An aggressive propagandism.

The influence of that first generation of Methodists is now generally recognized. The power with which it laid hold of the imbruted

multitudes in Great Britain, the thousands whom it won to a new life, the social conscience which it evoked, the new moral fiber which it bred in the English yeomanry, the mighty missionary impulse which it created, the new evangelical Church to which it gave rise, and the profound influence which it exerted on all the Churches,—all these are the familiar truths of history. They are recognized by Lecky and Green, the historians, and by any number of non-Methodist clergymen, such as the late Dr. Farrar.

In America, also, the new interpretation of Christianity was immediately and powerfully successful. In 1776, Methodism had 4,921 members; in 1786, 20,689; in 1796, 56,664; in 1806, 130,570; in 1816, 214,235; in 1826, 360,800; and in 1836, 650,103. No Church had ever made such rapid strides, either in this country or Europe. It had been paralleled only in the days of early Christianity.

This success came because Methodism was

an appeal, doctrinally, to the common sense of the people brought to bear on the interpretation of the Scriptures; because it was a message big with hope for mankind, in holding out the highest attainments in holiness to all men; and because it was re-enforced to a remarkable degree by the moral miracles of transformed lives. Dr. James M. Buckley, in his "History of Methodism," says:

"The personal influence of the preachers, exerted through their testimony, example, conversation, oratory, and discipline; the contact of the members in social life and in their almost continuous meetings; the hymns and prayers, and the reflex action of all upon each, and of each upon all; the power of truth relative to the moral condition and needs of the hearer; and the tremendous concentrated effect of fixed ideas as the work spread and assemblies increased until they became vast open-air congresses; and under peculiarly favorable circumstances a new power was developed, re-

sembling, in germs, the influence of smaller meetings, but so magnified as to seem almost a different force.

"Beyond and above all this was the might of the Holy Spirit. Without his aid great results might have followed, a powerful organization have been formed, many reformations of outer life effected; but profound modifications of character, amazing developments of courage, and the almost ceaseless flow, through a long life, of religious joy approaching ecstasy, triumphing over the infirmities of the body, dissipating dejection, and often exhibited overwhelmingly when mere human elements would have been wholly ineffectual to sustain it; and the preservation and growth of the fruits of the Spirit, and their correspondence with the plain teachings of God's Word,—constitute proof of the Divine origin of the movement as conclusive as that furnished when holy men of old spake, not of themselves, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Where does Methodism stand to-day, as com-

pared with this early type? What early characteristics has it lost? What of them has it retained?

We recognize the difficulty of a just reply to these questions. There is a danger of one's prejudices, the bias of his education and environment and temperament, dictating his reply. There is the danger of idealizing the past and undervaluing a prosaic and perhaps irritating present.

We have lost the monarchical government, the domination of the ministry in that government, and the closely-articulated class system. The mechanical characteristics of early Methodism are gone; and we may count this, on the whole, a gain, except in the loss of the class-meeting, which is a serious loss. Other organizations have sprung up in the Church, which turn their eyes outward toward service rather than inward toward experience. While these various societies are doing great good for the kingdom, yet they compare unfavorably at two points: they place service before character,

—work ahead of experience,—which is an abnormal and superficial method. And they reach only a part of the membership of the Church—less than one-half—while the early division of the entire membership into classes reached the entire membership.

Of the doctrinal characteristics we may fairly be said to retain all. In some of our Churches there is a slurring over of the Methodist teaching as to full salvation, and a rather faint emphasis on the "felt" salvation. Yet all three—the free, the felt, and the full salvation—are in our standards.

Of the vital characteristics enumerated above we have lost in simplicity of private life and public worship. We do not exercise discipline in the sense of excluding unworthy members from our Churches. The writer has been a member of the Church since childhood, and never has known of a case where a member was excluded without his consent from Church membership. The nearest to it has been an occasional withdrawal, by

request of the pastor, in cases of unusual flagrancy. We mention this not as indicating serious delinquency on the part of pastors and people, but to indicate the extent to which the views of both preachers and people have changed on the subject of Church discipline. A pastor who has convictions regarding the impropriety of allowing persons of defective life to remain in the Church does not urge those convictions, because he knows it would only stir up strife, and that some of his best people would not sustain the measures laid down in the Discipline. As to the self-sacrificing devotion to our ideals, as compared with that of early Methodists, while much heroic devotion may be found, it can hardly be said to be general.

It is at the point of an aggressive propagandism, however, that the most marked disparity exists, and to this point the argument of this book has been directed. Compared with some of our sister Churches we may claim to be an aggressive Church; and new forms of Church activity are being pushed with com-

mendable enterprise; such as the building of hospitals, orphanages, and various other eleemosynary institutions. The deaconess movement is a recent development, and our missionary movement represents a glorious development of aggressive Christianity.

Yet in soul-winning, taken as a whole, there has been a very great decline. As compared with the open-air services and the daily preaching of many of our early Methodist preachers, our methods of to-day are *dilettante* indeed. The writer knows of so-called strong Churches which have gone an entire year without a single conversion or accession on probation; while there are hundreds, if not thousands, where they would die out in a few years if it were not for the gains that come by letter from Churches that are spiritually alive.

Speaking broadly, Methodism to-day is Solomonic. That of a hundred years ago was Davidic, both in simplicity and aggressiveness.

A comparison of gains by decades during the first three decades of Methodism in America,

with the gains of the last three decades, will substantiate the position. From 1776 to 1786 our increase was over 300 per cent; from 1786 to 1796 it was 180 per cent; from 1796 to 1806 it was 132 per cent; from 1870 to 1880 the increase was 31 per cent; from 1880 to 1890, 28 per cent; and from 1890 to 1900 it was 21 per cent; with a large part of the increase due to gains in the foreign mission fields.

The editor of a leading Western daily said to the author a few months ago, "You Methodists have no excuse for existence as a separate Church any more; you have changed so completely." We replied, "You fail to note two facts: First, that the other Protestant Churches have accepted our teachings, even more largely than we have theirs; hence the change is by no means all with the Methodists. Second, you draw your conclusion from our most aristocratic Churches, with which your association and observation naturally fall. You forget that there are thousands of smaller Churches all over the land which preserve to a

remarkable degree the traditions and spirit of early Methodism." The editor acknowledged the justice of our observations; yet at the same time we knew that Methodism has lost some of its distinct character.

We do not indorse the closing sentences of the paragraph from the Rev. R. C. Nightingale, a rector of the Church of England, in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review,* yet there is something in it for Methodists to pray over:

"To those to whom the passion and fire of unselfish love will always be precious, under whatever circumstances they may happen to be exhibited, these old Methodist saints and martyrs are heroes of the highest type. Nearer than any order of Englishmen had ever done before they fulfilled the idea the New Testament conveys of the Petrine and Pauline Church. Its virtues and its failings were manifested by them with equal luxuriance. They saw visions; they spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance; they counted all things

dross except Christ's love; they were superstitious; they were self-confident; they imagined that God held their creed, and theirs alone; they thought that they had found the secret hidden from the ages, and would be able to reverse humanity's order and change the long-persistent ways of men. Fair, fond dreams of those souls that loved heaven more than earth; it is always so; and, alas! the end of it has always been the same. Except here and there, the light has quickly passed away, and the old dimness has taken its place once more. But the hope in man and God survives amongst the few who still dwell in the light, and they are sure that, step by step, man is conquering himself, and discovering the God that lies hid somewhere in the hearts of all."

A "God that lies hid somewhere in the hearts of all" is a drearily poor substitute for the Self-revealing Father God whom those early Methodists knew so intimately, and the "end of it" has by no means come yet, as we hope to show in the next chapter.

Chapter XX.

THE RENAISSANCE OF METHODISM.

Do we need a Renaissance of early Methodism?

If by this is meant a new birth of its forms of worship and exact methods of work, we reply, "No." The forms of any live organism must be regrown from age to age, even as a tree grows new rings and bark. Where the Spirit of life is present this adaptation to changing environment will easily take place.

If the question means a new birth of early Methodist phraseology, we reply, "No." Set phrases get shot through with the prejudices and misconceptions of party strifes, and so lose their usefulness. They also frequently become mere stock phrases, the vehicles of religious cant. Moreover, it would be strange if a gener-

ation of as searching Biblical criticism and as great scientific advance as ours should not be able to improve upon the nomenclature of religious doctrine—to recast some of the old teachings in molds more in harmony with present-day thought. At any rate, there should be the utmost freedom to make the attempt, and the interpreting value of new scientific truth should be frankly and fully recognized. Hence, we say, there is no loss if the old nomenclature, and party shibboleths are replaced by a new terminology.

But if by the "Renaissance of Methodism" is meant a new birth of its simple, pure, fervent, self-sacrificing, and heroic spirit, we reply, "Yes! this is our supreme need."

We do not need the shield and spear of Richard Cœur de Lion. They are the weapons of a bygone age. But we do superlatively need his lion heart. As the young Methodism of the twentieth century takes up the mantle of the fathers, let it be with the petition of Elisha to Elijah: "Let a double portion of thy spirit,

I pray thee, be upon me." The result will be the pushing forward of our golden age into the twentieth century through the Renaissance of Methodism.

At this point some one will say: "Ah! but movements never repeat themselves. The hands on the clock always move onward." This objection sounds plausible, but it is not true to history. Is it not true that the High Church movement to-day is a renaissance of the Church of the fifth and sixth centuries? Is not Roman Catholicism, in many respects, a reversion to the old Jewish type of worship, the appeal to the soul through the eye and ear, and the mediatorship of a human priesthood? And is it not admitted by non-Methodists—as we have seen in Dr. Nightingale's characterization—as well as fully believed by ourselves, that early Methodism itself was simply a renaissance of apostolic Christianity? If so, then, why not again?

If we have studied history aright the progress of the kingdom in the world, both be-

fore and since Christ, has been by a series of cycles. These cycles have run about as follows:

1. A religious movement born in one or more great souls, through the vision of some new or long-neglected truth, grows rapidly, but with persecution.

2. The movement grows to climax of power, persecution diminishes, and its forms crystallize into permanence.

3. Because of the movement's social, political, or financial importance, men join themselves to it, imitating its forms and repeating its shibboleths, but without drinking in of its spirit.

4. Then follows decline of essential strength, loss of prestige, and humilating criticism, both from within and without.

5. Then, if there be a true and heroic "remnant," there follows a renaissance of the original principles and power of the movement, with wider sweep.

Though the progress has been thus by cycles,

and retarded at times by the declines referred to, yet, broadly speaking, the movement has been always onward and upward; for each cycle has been a wider one than the preceding, reaching a larger part of humanity, and lifting it to a higher average level than any preceding cycle. This has been the method of the evolution of the divine life among men; and we have no reason to think that the method will be changed, since in every realm evolution is "continuous, progressive change, according to fixed laws and by means of resident forces."

The only question remaining, from the author's standpoint, is: Have we the "resident forces" necessary to carry forward the evolution in harmony with the fixed laws, the "observed order of facts," already noted? Or, stated differently, have we the factors in Methodism to bring about the renaissance of its essential life and power, which was a renewal and carrying out to their logical conclusion of the principles of the Protestant Reformation, which, in turn, was a rebirth of apostolic Christianity?

We believe we have those factors—those resident forces.

We have, first, the doctrines of compelling power. Our fathers were happy in what they did not say, as well as in what they said in our creed: as to Scriptural inspiration, for example. Those doctrines peculiar to Methodism—the free, felt, and full salvation tenets—being based largely upon the data furnished by consciousness, are supported by modern scientific and philosophical methods of research and reasoning. They have stood, also, the most critical of all examinations,—the test of generations of experimental practice. They have the yet further seal that they have been adopted by almost all other bodies of Protestant Christians, in their substance, and have borne like blessed fruit wherever faithfully presented. All of which goes to buttress our contention that they are founded in the revelation of God.

Our paramount duty as Methodists is, therefore, to re-emphasize these fundamental doctrines. The way to make Methodists and to

make Christians of the apostolic type is to preach these truths clearly, unctuously, and constantly, and to expect results from them all the time in the salvation of souls. And here is the bearing of this chapter on the general theme of this book. *The constant preaching of these great basal doctrines in the infinite variety of ways which the inspiring Spirit will suggest to alert and consecrated minds, expecting immediate results all the year round, will bring in the Renaissance of Methodism and the Christian Age of Gold.*

Methodism has a message, a distinctive message. If we are true to that message, we shall take the world. But we are not true to that message if we are not emphasizing it. *It is where we put our emphasis that determines the character of our work. And a misplaced emphasis is as fatal to the progress of the kingdom as the worst of heresies.* The heartache of earnest men is, that so many of our number are engaged, as a distinguished bishop of our Church has said, in busily and painstakingly "polish-

ing their buttons;" never firing a shot; never bringing down a man; but industriously and laboriously "polishing their buttons!" Away with trifling, and let us attack a world of sin with our fundamental message, and the world is ours before the close of the century!

The failure to emphasize the message of Methodism will devitalize our own people. The constant tendency in all ages of the Christian Church has been to drop back from the faith-life of the New Covenant to the legal, formal life of the Old Testament; that is, from the Christian to the Jewish type of religion. All movement inclines to the direction of least resistance, and formal, legal religion is so much easier than the high-pressure faith-life of Christianity, that the Christian heart tends constantly to revert to it. Whole Churches drop back into it, and perhaps the majority of the members of the various Christian communions are in that condition to-day. Thus Judaism conquers the Cross!

It was the condition John Wesley himself

was in up to that night in May, 1738, when he "felt his heart strangely warmed, and that he did trust Christ and Christ only for salvation." And there Methodism was born, and its message was born—that all men may be saved, fully saved, saved now, and know it by the glad witness of God's own Spirit. But human nature is the same under a Methodist coat as under an Anglican or Lutheran, and the failure to emphasize constantly and clearly the message of Methodism allows multitudes of our people to slip back into the old-time legalism, and very many of them to be lost to the Church altogether.

Not only have we the necessary doctrines, but we have the consecrated "remnant." And it is a very large "remnant," too—such as kingdoms are made of. The number of men and women who reproduce in their character to-day the essential spirit of early Christianity is very great—hundreds of thousands of them, if, indeed, the number does not run up into the millions. We have self-sacrificing and uncomplain-

ing ministers, who go out every year from Conference to taste new fruits of poverty and suffering, and who do it joyfully for Jesus' sake, and come back shouting at the next Conference over the hard-earned sheaves. We have heroic missionaries, who face loneliness and homesickness—every mountain is to them a "Heimweh Fluh"—sickness, persecution, and even death, without a murmur—the Charley Grays, and Gamewells, and Thoburns, and Taylors; and in well-nigh all of them is the spirit of that missionary of our sister Church, who, when about to be slain by the Boxers, sent word to his wife to raise up their baby boy in America to come back to China and take the place of the father on the very field where he was being sacrificed. We have the devout, self-denying, patient laymen, who are pouring out their time and money like water in maintaining their local Churches throughout the land, often leading forlorn hopes, and the measure of whose devotion has never yet been understood. We have—and here we walk softly as on holy ground—an unnumbered

company of "shut-in" saints, obscured and unheralded in their hidden, yet puissant ministry, whose windows are ever open toward Jerusalem, and whose prayers rise like a fountain night and day, that God will behold and visit Zion.

Do you think that God will let a Church die out that has such a host of shining ones as these? Never while his promises abide!

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar.
Who follows in his train?

Who best can drink his cup of woe,
And triumph over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below—
He follows in his train.

A glorious band, the chosen few,
On whom the spirit came:
Twelve valiant saints, their hope they knew.
And mocked the cross and flame.

They climbed the dizzy steep to heaven
Through peril, toil, and pain;
O God! to us may grace be given
To follow in their train! —HEBER

Then, last, there is the unexpected Factor—unsuspected always by faithless men and worldly-wise men—God.

The great engines down in the heart of the *Campania* kept throbbing away while we slept on our way back from Europe not long ago. We went to our stateroom, weary and homesick, and unable to move the ship a hair's-breadth forward; but all through the night, while we slept, the great engines worked tirelessly on, and when we arose in the morning we were two hundred miles nearer home. God still works, and fulfills himself in many ways. New surprises of his power shall yet break forth. Our only business is to be doing his present will, that we may be in touch with Infinitude when he shall loose from the leash the lightnings of his power.

In Central Southern France the waters of the Saone and Rhone meet. The Saone is a yellow stream, from the alluvial plains of Central France, somewhat like our Missouri. The Rhone sweeps down from the crystal Lake Geneva amid Alpine heights. And when the two streams unite, for many miles their currents do not blend; there is the yellow Saone and the

crystal Rhone, both in the same channel. But at length the Rhone triumphs and flows clear and beautiful to the blue Mediterranean.

Shall it not be even so with our Methodism? With our universal Christian Church? There are two currents in the same channel, now,—the worldly, its color of the earth, earthy,—but also the stream of life, whose Source is high up among the Hills of God. Please God, it is this that shall triumph, and we shall flow on at length, a river pure as crystal, into the Ocean of Eternity.

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